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Creemore clothier gives industry a dressing-down

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Michelle Pothier, president of Mad River Clothing Company, with her son Gabriel.

Diane Klein

CREEMORE, Ont. – A local clothing manufacturer in this small community (population 1200, 120 km north of Toronto) has set out to prove that the clothing industry can indeed have a conscience. Michelle Pothier, president and founder of the Mad River Clothing Company, has created a manufacturing model for the garment industry which she says supports social, environmental and community causes.

"It is utterly amazing that an industry marketed to women and children can exploit the very same just by virtue of race and geography," says Pothier. And her tiny company has set out to try to counter some of that exploitation by the big guys.

All clothing sold by Mad River (named for its location on a fast-flowing tributary of the Nottawasaga) is done in-house by local professional sewers who earn a competitive salary. The pride they take in their work translates into a high quality line of children's clothing. Pothier hopes that through her fair-labor policy she may be able to eliminate some of the exploitive labor stigmas attached to the children's garment trade.

It seems to be working. Growing market interest in Mad River clothing is drawing consumers to the shop at Pothier's company store, and – in turn – draws people to the town of Creemore, which benefits economically from the presence of its unusual clothing store.

Widening ripple

The widening ripple benefits from Pothier's policies have reached even a United Nations agency. *Harrowsmith Country Life* recently recognized Mad River's "community-minded, environmentally conscious" approach to business with an award and a cheque, and Pothier chose UNICEF to receive the $5,000 award. "They have a track record in getting kids in developing countries out of textile labour situations," she explains.

The textile industry, in addition to its unsavory reputation as an exploiter of female employees, is also accused of environmental insensitivity.

According to Pothier, it is the sixth largest polluting industry in the world. Environmental issues range from the levels of chemicals used to process fabric to the fact that somehow, between the mill and the finished product, over 40 per cent of all cotton ends up in a landfill somewhere.

To offset these abuses, Pothier tries to put pressure on the industry to clean up its act. She does this in part by exploring and experimenting with environmentally responsible alternatives for the production of children's clothing, including:

- organic cotton, produced without the traditional chemical herbicides and pesticides;
- hemp, a Canadian source of durable, soft fibre which needs almost no pesticides or fertilizers;

See **CLOTHIER** *page 2...*

On getting dressed

- How should Christians dress?
- Is vanity really so bad?
- What about kids & clothes?
- Clothes & a social conscience
- Pp. 4, 10-16

Rent-A-Priest opens doors for married Catholic priests

Alan Doerksen

BRAMPTON, Ont. – If a Roman Catholic priest gets married, his church forbids him from performing most priestly duties. So what's a married priest to do? One option is to join Rent-A-Priest, an agency that markets the skills of married Catholic priests in Canada and the U.S.

Rent-A-Priest is no shotgun organization. In Canada, more than 4,000 men have left the priesthood since the late 1960s, nine out of 10 to marry, according to the Rent-A-Priest website (In the U.S., there are 20,000 married priests – one out of every three Catholic priests who were ordained in the U.S., according to Father John Shuster, Vice-President of Celibacy Is The Issue (Rent-A-Priest's sister organization).)

Meanwhile, the Catholic Church is facing a shortage of celibate priests, causing some parish doors to be in danger of closing. Rent-A-Priest argues that married priests are as valid as celibate ones. "We are not 'ex-priests,'" the agency declares. "Once a priest, always a priest! We love our families

See **MARRIED** *page 2...*

A married Catholic priest performs a home baptism.

Clothier has enterpreneurial skill, responsible values

... continued from page 1

• Foxfibre™, an organic cotton fibre which allows different strains of colored cotton to be woven together, providing a beautiful rich color without dying;

• natural dyes, such as indigo, cochineal and madder, which achieve the intensity and depth of chemical dyes and which are some of the earth's richest natural colors;

• Tencel®, a new eco-textile made from a natural cellulose harvested from trees being grown on land which is unsuitable for food crops.

The Mad River Clothing Co.'s head office in Creemore.

Showcasing other causes

Last weekend, Pothier finished her third tour with Lilith Fair, a celebration of women in music organized by popular Canadian singer/songwriter Sarah McLachlan. The Mad River booth there featured an organic cotton T-shirt for children. Pothier's passionate presence on these tours helps fair participants become more conscientious about current issues in the manufacture of children's clothing. But the benefits to the industry have been even more tangible: Pothier donates $2 for each T-shirt sold at the fair to a children's cause. In 1998 the money went to UNICEF; this year it was for the Children's Wish Foundation.

This past summer Pothier also helped the Canadian chapter of Friends of the Earth develop an awareness-raising fundraiser: a children's T-shirt on organic cotton, with a beautiful environmental logo. The shirt will be on sale next spring, thanks to the work of a co-operative not-for-profit distributing company – another of her ideas for keeping production costs down and maximizing the benefit to Friends of the Earth.

Passion infuses skill

The Mad River Clothing Company wouldn't still be in business after six years if Pothier weren't so passionate about the things which matter to her, a passion which goes beyond the bottom line, and perhaps rare in one still two years from her 30th birthday.

"We're with her because her business is a rare blend of entrepreneurial skill and responsible values," said *Harrowsmith* in presenting its "Grow Your Own Business" award. Pothier confesses, "Let's face it, fashion is essentially a frivolous industry. By nature, it is wasteful of energy and resources."

Her conclusion? " In my own small way, I want to show that the clothing industry can have a conscience. Without sacrificing our principles, Mad River makes clothes that are rugged and look great on our children."

For a catalogue of eco-friendly children's clothing, contact Mad River Clothing Company at 1-800-268-6055 or: ***madriver@barint.on.ca.***

For another angle on Pothier's "madness," see p. 14 of this issue.

Married priests call for optional celibacy

... continued from page 1

and our Roman Catholic tradition."

Shuster explores this issue further on the website: "Because we have married, we have been dismissed from the clerical state. We are no longer clerics (office-holders) in the church's hierarchy, but we retain the fullness of the priesthood....," he asserts.

39 popes were married

Looking at the history of celibate priests, Shuster says, "For the first 14 centuries of our church's history, priests, bishops and 39 popes were married. Married priests and celibate priests worked side by side in service to the people of God. The majority of the celibate priests were monks. A string of worldly medieval popes worked to impose mandatory celibacy on the priesthood in order to centralize political power in Rome and seize the land of the married priest families throughout Europe. They succeeded at the Second Lateran Council in 1139.... It has almost been forgotten that the married priesthood is the original and traditional priesthood of our Roman Catholic Church."

Louise Haggett of Framingham, Mass., started Rent-A-Priest in 1992, when she was unable to find a priest to visit her ailing mother in a senior centre. "Mom was a devout Catholic and never saw a priest until she was comatose, at the hospital weeks later. I formed Rent-A-Priest so that no other faithful senior Catholics would be abandoned by the church, especially in the hour of their death."

While the Vatican speaks of "danger of death" as the occasion when Catholics may utilize the services of married priests, sacraments other than Penance are not licit (institutionally legal) when administered by married priests, according to the Vatican.

Rent-A-Priest Canada was begun in October 1997 by Joan Lang as a result of her frustration with the failure of the official church to talk to their people about the shortage of priests, ask them for input about what solutions they could suggest and provide other options than the "clustering of parishes."

Re-embracing their priesthood

Lang would like the Catholic Church to officially restore to full orders and use the gifts of married priest couples by placing them in priestless parishes, and allow optional celibacy for those who are still in active clerical ministry. She also favors ordination of women to the priesthood.

Priests connected with the agency provide pastoral care and services such as: marriage, baptism and the Eucharist. One catch is that married priests are not allowed to perform these ceremonies in Catholic churches. Instead, they must find other settings, such as homes or parks.

Father Donald Campbell, of Brampton, Ont., was the first Canadian married priest to join forces with Rent-A-Priest in 1997. Ordained in 1983, Campbell took a leave of absence in 1991 and was married to his wife, Patricia, in 1993.

"The primary focus of the group is to help [married] priests re-embrace their priesthood," he says. "The transition into marriage doesn't change the validity of the ordination."

Campbell's work as a priest is limited to homes, public halls or the outdoors. Although that takes away some of Campbell's priestly privileges, he has a flexibility celibate priests do not. For instance, no diocese allows outdoor services, but Campbell can conduct such services because he is working outside of the mainstream church structure. For Campbell to perform a marriage ceremony "is totally valid and legal in the eyes of the province," he says, because he is ordained. He can also perform a marriage ceremony for someone who is divorced without waiting for an annulment, something a celibate priest can't do.

Appealing to 'lapsed Catholics'

Performing marriages is the main service Campbell provides as a priest. He is also able to perform baptisms, which he says can later be registered with Catholic churches.

One of the main groups Campbell sees Rent-A-Priest catering to is Catholics who have left the church. "Probably the largest growing denomination are what used to be called 'lapsed Catholics,'" he observes. Married priests such as Campbell are "making ourselves available to those on the margins of the church."

Campbell agrees with Shuster that married clergy used to be widely accepted within the early Catholic Church. "The move to celibacy began when Emperor Constantine was converted," he says. "Those in favor of celibacy became the power structure. There were many married clergy who were persecuted."

Campbell would like to see the Catholic Church make celibacy optional for priests. He sees this as being a good way to address the church's problem of "a dramatic decline in the number of priests." In Edmonton, for example, half of the parishes may have to close due to a shortage of priests, he says.

Recently, says Campbell, the Canadian Catholic Church (for instance, the Toronto Archdiocese) has been accepting Anglican priests — some of whom are married — into its ranks. Some of these priests have left the Anglican Church because they are against that church's policy of ordaining women. Campbell is not comfortable with this reasoning.

Recently, the Catholic Church ordained a man in Niagara Falls, Ont., who had been married and had children but whose wife had died. Campbell says he does not like the message this sends: that a married person who feels called to the priesthood is welcome after his spouse has died.

Besides his work as a priest, Campbell also does fundraising work with Greenpeace Canada. He says he is typical of married priests, who often have to take on work outside the church to supplement their incomes.

Manifestation of conflict

Some Catholic leaders are critical of Rent-A-Priest. Joseph Boyle, principal of St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto, says it's true that "a priest is always a priest." But, according to the *Globe and Mail*, "there's still a question of standing – whether you're in good standing with the church."

Boyle says the work of Rent-A-Priest in employing married priests is "not a resolution but just a manifestation of the conflict in the church." He believes priests are identified by the church as performing in the role of Jesus, which means they should be male and chaste. "The argument for a celibate clergy is that it frees you from other basic commitments to other people."

Dutch-Canadian couple named 'Righteous Among the Nations'

YAD VASHEM PHOTO

Lucas and Alice Koops

CC Staff

JERUSALEM – A Dutch-Canadian couple who harbored a young Jewish woman during World War II has been honored posthumously with the title "Righteous Among the Nations" by the Jerusalem-based Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority).

During World War II, the late Lucas and Alice Koops kept a secret which has now been revealed after more than 50 years, reports Yad Vashem in a press release.

The Koops family lived in Zaandam, the Netherlands, at that time. A businessman, Lucas was involved with the Dutch Underground after German forces overran his country. He helped find safe havens and secure false documents and food vouchers for Dutch Jews and others facing deportation and potential death at the hands of the Nazis.

With a large family and good income, it was conceivable that the Koopses would have had a maid. However, as their daughter Ann says today, none of the children knew that Mirjam Berger, whom they knew as "Hillie Van Limburg," was Jewish, or why she was really living with them. "We thought she was there to help my mother with the children and the housework," she recalls. "We really liked her and felt she was part of our family."

Kept in the dark

The Koops also took in two Jewish men, again with such cleverness that all participants survived the war. While the children were kept in the dark, Ann Koops says, "Our parents taught us what is right and not to worry about the costs or the risks involved."

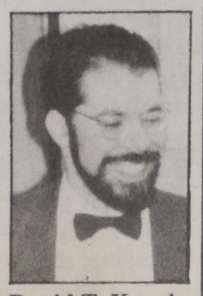
After the war was over, some of the truth came out, and members of the Koops family and their Jewish "guests" became friends for life. "We often visited Mirjam's parents," Ann recalls.

The Koops family moved to Canada in the 1950s. Lucas Koops ran a travel agency in Toronto until his retirement 25 years ago.

In Hamilton, Ontario, at the end of August, Jehudi Kinar, Israel's Consul General in Toronto, presented a medal and certificate of honor to the children and grandchildren of Lucas and Alice Koops. Their names will also be added to the Righteous Honor Wall at Yad Vashem's headquarters in Jerusalem.

Do aboriginals need special treatment?

Principalities & Powers



David T. Koyzis

Last year British Columbia announced an historic agreement with the Nisga'a, an aboriginal people in the north of the province numbering some 5,500. Negotiations began in 1990, and the resulting treaty recognizes Nisga'a claims to nearly 2,000 square kilometres of land, establishes a new level of government with municipal-like powers, and will transfer to the Nisga'a $190 million dollars over the next 15 years.

The Nisga'a Treaty sparked controversy, as have other attempts to accommodate aboriginal claims. Those favoring such claims have a strong historical argument on their side. After all, over the centuries the first nations of the Americas were unjustly dispossessed by European settlers backed by more powerful weapons, governments and social organizations. It should not be surprising that these first nations should seek compensation for the losses their ancestors suffered.

On the other hand, Canada's recent aboriginal policies have been criticized by many for violating the cherished principle of legal equality for all citizens. Worse yet, the entire system of native reserves is based on the sort of racial classifications typical of the former apartheid régime in South Africa. Where is the justice in treating people differently according to their ancestry? How can it be fair to exempt some people and not others from taxes or from seasonal hunting and fishing quotas?

'Inherent right' not absolute

Some have gone so far as to urge that the reserves be disbanded altogether and that aboriginal Canadians be treated simply as Canadians with no greater or fewer rights than their fellow citizens. This would seem best to accord with the Western constitutional principle that citizenship is tied to territory and birth and not to ethnicity.

While I would not go this far, I believe there is little merit to arguing that the first nations have an "inherent right" to self-government which others are automatically obligated to acknowledge *in toto*. It would be impossible to maintain any constitutional or legal order if an aggrieved group could simply elect to exempt itself from its provisions and to set up a new one in its place. The Wilsonian principle of national self-determination works no better in domestic politics than in the international arena.

This said, however, no constitution treats its citizens absolutely equally, particularly in a federal system. The fact that there are some 10 million people in Ontario and only 125,000 in Prince Edward Island means that each Prince Edward Islander has a far greater say in her provincial government than does an Ontarian in his. Furthermore, when Albertans speak of equality of provinces, they are appealing to a principle already in tension with equal citizenship. Thus, establishing a so-called third order of government is hardly incongruous with existing realities of federalism.

A solution open to others

What is the solution, then, to our aboriginal issues? Ultimately there is no one right approach. The aboriginal peoples must be treated justly, and this means that all sides must be willing to talk and, especially, listen to each other. Where a claim to distinct nationhood has been made, it must be heard and evaluated by governing authorities. But since such a claim is likely to conflict with other potentially legitimate claims, including those of other first nations, it cannot simply be satisfied in full without paying due attention to the latter.

My own preference is that aboriginal aspirations be recognized in ways open, as far as possible, to other Canadians, such as by adopting proportional representation at provincial and national levels, by working creatively within our existing federal structures, and by encouraging other forms of power-sharing at the local level.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario.

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Editorial

Do clothes 'make' us?

Marian Van Til

The old adage says: "Clothes make the man"– and these days we'd want to add: "or woman." That proverb is true in that we can project to the world practically any image we wish by the clothing we choose to wear, or not to wear. Our clothing can reveal much about our self-image, personal habits, social status. We can also hide behind our clothing – as Adam and Eve tried to do behind their fig leaves – and let it project an image of someone and something we are not. The biblical observation that "out of the heart come the issues of life" certainly seems true in regard to what we wear as well as in the many other qualities we show to the world which reveal our heart-direction.

But perhaps we should back up for a moment and go to the beginning, even before those fig leaves. Adam and Eve lived in the Garden gloriously naked. Glorious because they were created "good," and lived in the state in which God created them, freely, unabashedly unencumbered by clothing, without the least shame of their own bodies, nor of each others' bodies.

Shame on them

We all know that their wanting to be like God changed that, for them, and for us, and all human beings for as long as *this* earth is our home. Shame entered their repertoire of feelings, and with shame came a self-consciousness of their naked bodies, in front of each other *and God*. According to the Genesis account, God's first gracious act to our fallen parents was to provide clothing for them. Some Christian traditions see the manner in which God did that as extremely significant in that there is the implication that God redeemed Adam and Eve's shame by a shedding of blood — animal skins were provided – on their account, with its very early hint of that Other Sacrifice.

So in our Christian worldview, human clothing will forever be associated with the "covering of our shame." Even so, the other side of the cloth, so to speak, is that clothing is also a gift to us which God turned to our good. Apart from now needing clothing as both a moral and physical cover, wouldn't life be rather dull if we didn't have the pleasure of choosing clothing to buy and wear, and if we couldn't enjoy what others wear?

He knows your needs

Not surprisingly, in one way or another the Bible has quite a lot to say about clothing. There are examples that relate to a great diversity of life functions and situations. There are not many, if any, specific biblical clothing proscriptions that we in mainstream Christianity interpret as still strictly valid for us. But looking at how the Bible mentions clothing, and in what settings and functions, will help provide the context for the articles in this issue which delve into how we Christians can, and do, and perhaps should, dress in our modern world.

Beyond covering our nakedness, biblical clothing has many functions, as clothing always will because God created us many-faceted beings: since the Fall it has been (with food) one of the two basic human needs which God knows we need (Gen. 28:20; Deut. 10:18). Clothing is always seen (along with food) as a basic necessity, and God's ire burns against those who prevent the poor from being able to afford clothing to cover and protect themselves.

In that regard, incidentally, because women could not generally survive without the support of a male relative, among the Israelites men were to provide clothing (and food) for their wives, and for their *first* wives if they took another wife (Ex. 21:10) – a useful bit of information for those prone toward "proof texts"!

A time for mourning, for dancing

Specific clothing is seen as an indication of celebration, of mourning, of disease, of widowhood.

Clothing worn a particular way, accompanied by jewels and various adornments can indicate vanity and a decadent lifestyle (Isa. 3:20ff.); it can reveal an exaggerated piety put on for public show (Matt. 23:5). It is an indication of status and wealth. Fine clothing has great value and is often given as a gift: to a favorite son (Gen. 37:3, 23); to honor one's guest(s) (Gen. 41:42); as a prize for correctly answering a riddle at a wedding feast (Judges 14:12).

Because of its value, clothing often acted as wartime booty (Josh. 22:8) and was the object of theft (Ex. 22:9), the ultimate example being Jesus' robes and tunics being seized and divided among four soldiers, with his valuable seamless undergarment raffled to the one really "lucky" one of the four (John 19:23-24).

Whether external coverings or undergarments, clothing is intimate: in a couple of biblical instances, clothing identifies a person by his or her smell (Esau's clothes smell of the fields and the hunt, his profession (Gen. 27:27) – as our work clothes do, whether office attire or jeans and hard hat; the lovers in Song of Songs revel in the smell of each others' clothing (4:11) – as any of us who have been in love undoubtedly have, or do).

If particular clothing can remind us of a lover, it can also remind us of our love for God, and of being set apart in specific ways for his service. Specific, intricately woven and adorned vestments – designer clothing if ever there was any, patterned by the Ultimate Clothier himself – are essential for the priests to properly carry out their jobs in God's presence. Though the Reformed tradition has eschewed clerical vestments except for the preaching gown, perhaps that issue ought to be revisited (as indeed, some individual congregations and ministers *are* revisiting it).

Something we understand

Perhaps because clothing is so intimate a part of human life and putting on and throwing off clothing is so much a part of our daily lives, when Scripture uses clothing terminology metaphorically, as it often does, we know exactly what it means – whether when symbolizing some human quality or action, or referring to God himself. We're comforted by that "garment" of salvation that envelops us; and terrified by that other "garment" of vengeance. We know corruption when it's compared to moth-eaten clothes and we feel the cleansing liberation of redemption as if removing filthy clothes (Zech. 3:3-4).

When God stoops to our level and speaks of himself as if he actually *wears* things he's made in the universe, we take note. We "get it" when he describes himself as "robed in splendor" (Isa. 63:1), "adorned in glory" and "clothed in honor and majesty" (Job 40:10). And we're horrified and fascinated when he says he is wearing "garments stained crimson in the winepress" (Isa. 63:1), which the NIV interprets as a prophetic picture of a blood-spattered Christ waging war against sin at his second coming. In Christ's admonition to the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:17-19) – who are so cold-bloodedly lukewarm that Christ wishes to spew them from his mouth – he tells them he wants to buy fire-refined gold for them, and "white clothes to cover their shameful nakedness" (NIV) but they think they already own these things, and aren't interested in his lavish and gracious gifts.

Clothing is also a lavish gift of God, when one thinks about it. And as with any gift, we can use it rightly or wrongly. In this issue of CC we want to call attention to some of the things we do right when it comes to our clothing, to prick our consciences about things that may need improvement. Dr. Helen Sterk of Calvin College, who has specialized in this subject, says we should keep three principles in mind when choosing, wearing and thinking about our clothes: modesty, stewardship and creativity. We'll take a look at all three of those in various ways. But since we're Calvinists, perhaps that last one needs a little extra emphasis. Dr. Sterk reminds us that part of being creative means having fun. So the last thing we want to do is have fun!

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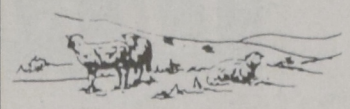
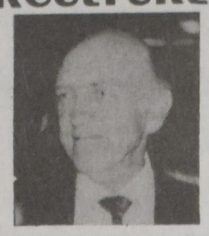
Who is the victim?

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE





Vern Gleddie was on holiday recently, and his thoughts turned from his sheep and other specifically agricultural concerns to a riveting incident which occurred while he and his family were camping; an incident which is providing him – and us – food for thought.

Shrill screams awakened us at 5:45 a.m. in the campground where my wife and I were spending a few days with our daughter, our son and his wife and baby. I jumped out of bed and into my pants and shoes. By then the female screams were joined by loud male calls for help.

As soon as I left our camper I could see activity at a campsite kitty-corner from ours, one occupied by a young couple and two young children. I arrived in time to see a black bear leaving the tent, which he had shredded. The mother stood holding her baby, blood covering his head and face. A neighboring camper, already up, had beaten the bear off with a stick.

"Where is Malcolm?," the father yelled. "Did the bear take him?" My daughter, however, arriving on the scene before me, had taken the boy to keep him away from the bear which did not leave. (A man watching everything from the safety of his RV later rolled down his window and drolly asked, "Did the bear take the baby?")

The bear stood only a few yards off, watching the proceedings. I pelted him with stones, telling him to "get out." I was hoping he would respond to an authoritative command, something like my sheepdog might.

He moved off only a short distance. Again I threw stones and ordered him out, and again he moved only a few steps. By this time my son had joined me with an axe someone had thrown and we chased the bear up a bank and out of sight.

No attractants here?

In the meantime, the mother, hysterical, had been calmed by my daughter, who brought her and her children to our campsite. Though the youngest child, 18 months, had bled profusely from a head wound, my wife, a nurse, was able to assure the mother that it was only superficial, and the family was soon off down the road to the hospital.

The mother had been injured too – below the knee. Our daughter-in-law held tightly onto her own little three-month-old Katie, with whom she and her husband had been sleeping in a tent near our camper.

My son and I rotated to the scene of the "invasion" where we discovered possible bear attractants in the tent: partly-filled baby bottles, baby wipes and empty beer cans. We drove into town to report the incident, hoping for a quick response.

The ranger and a policeman soon arrived. Surprisingly, the ranger, after looking around without actually going into the tent (nor had we), announced there was nothing there that would attract a bear. In 20 years of back-country camping, sometimes the only campers in a campground, this was the closest encounter we have had. We were always careful to keep not only food out of our tent, but also such things as soap and toothpaste. We were merely following park rules.

Comfort food

I returned to our camp to make breakfast for our families and a woman from Washington whom we invited over for a "debriefing." She, with her dog, was tenting next to the tent the bear had entered. She had locked herself and her dog in her car when she heard the screaming and had watched "the heroes" from there.

We were beginning to eat breakfast when a rifle shot rang out through the trees. Goodbye bear. I felt a twinge of regret. He had returned, but to a different site, where he surprised a man carrying out his garbage. The man dropped his garbage and ran, and the bear went for the garbage. "This is a predatory bear," the ranger had said, and shot it.

Who belongs where?

There was some resentment and indignation among campers, though for conflicting reasons. Some resented people ignorantly or knowingly keeping bear attractants in their tent. Also, before the authorities arrived, one camper rode around on his bike and came back to say, "They have not told us everything. There is a bear trap set just outside the campground." There was also indignation over the fact that bears are "allowed" anywhere in the area, though such people don't realize that it is really we who are the intruders.

This was an interesting experience of interplay between people and another creature God has created, between civilization and wilderness, authority and citizens, privilege and survival, politics and reality.

I'm not entirely sure what to make of it all. What is the meaning of "to have dominion over and subdue" in such a situation? Who and what belongs where? All the participants had a perspective on the incident and a story to tell. What would the bear's story have been?

Vern Gleddie owns and operates a sheep ranch outside Edmonton, Alberta.

For a quick Letter to the Editor, send e-mail to: cceditor@aol.com or fax to: (905) 682-8313.

Send your questions to Peter and Marja. Confidentiality is assured.

Coloring outside the lines

I am writing to thank your offices for donating back issues of *Christian Courier* to the Institute for Christian Studies. On August 6 to 9 we held a conference called "Color Outside the Lines: Art & Imagination in God's World."

Throughout the conference we made copies of your newspaper available to attendees to take home and read at their leisure. Your donation to this summer's conference was greatly appreciated. I hope that individuals who took a copy will see the value in your work and become new subscribers to your newspaper. Thanks so much.

Yvonne M. Haaksma
Institute for Christian Studies
Toronto

So do we! Thank *you*. **Ed.**

Finds film reviews helpful

Thank you for the film reviews you present us with. We have come to rely on them. Without them we would not know what pictures to see because the choices have become overwhelming, even in a small town like Sarnia (Ontario).

The recent review of *Eyes Wide Shut* was particularly good. I could sense the importance Marian Van Til attached to this film because her writing was very powerful. Such good writing does not come easy. Unfortunately the film had just left Sarnia, so we missed seeing it. Friends have seen it and they agree entirely with her assessment.

George S. Visser
Sarnia, Ontario

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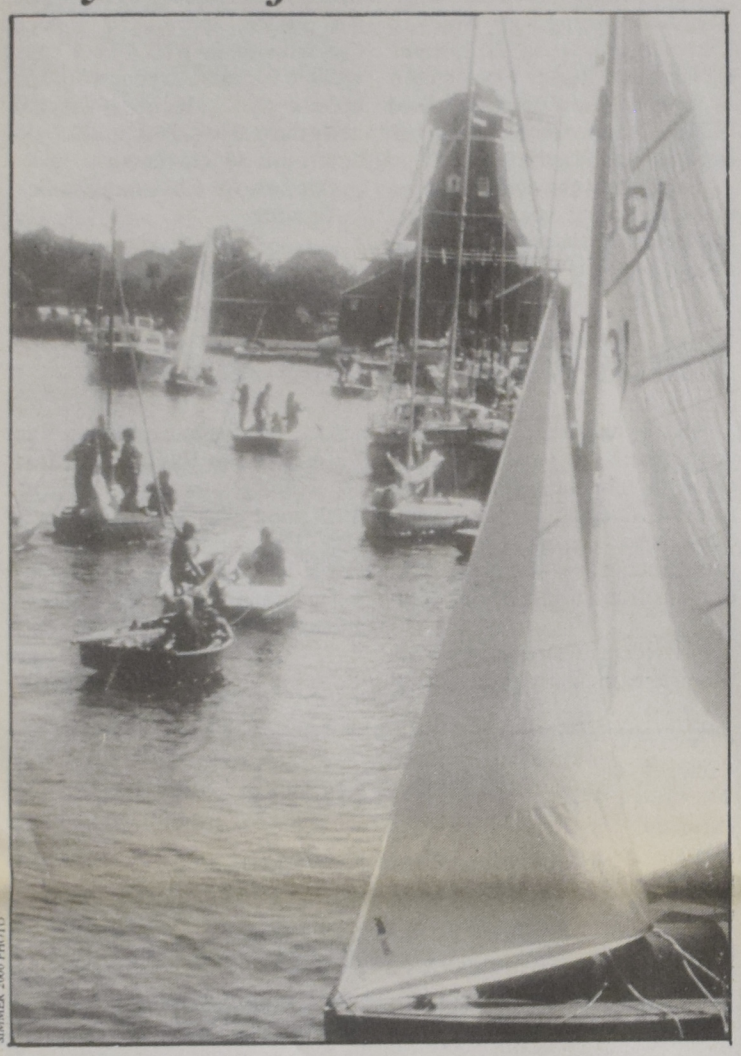
Finally going back where they came from?



SIMMER 2000 PHOTO

Sailing along the Frisian waterfront.

Diane Klein, with files from Simmer 2000

LEEUWARDEN, Friesland – "Your *entire consistory* is made up of *Frisians*?!" gasped the visitor, when our pastor mentioned elders Jellema, Dykstra, Bruinsma, and Minnema.

"Oh, NO," responded the Reverend, hastening to repair the misconception, "just four. But four is enough!"

That is a true story, and about as kind to natives of Friesland as a Frisian joke can be. Or should be, some might add.

Hollanders from the rest of the Dutch provinces have always regarded the Frisians as a breed apart. Their language (sometimes referred to as a speech impediment) cannot be understood, even by their fellow Netherlanders; and even among the rest of the Dutch, Frisians are regarded as particularly, well, hard-headed.

But a year of resplendence and celebration is about to dawn for Friesland, as the province prepares to call its sons and daughters home for a one-of-a-kind, three-week-long Frisian party in the summer of 2000. It looks as if – by the time the last of the festivities have come to their glorious conclusion – the rest of the Dutch will wish (for the first time in their lives) that they too had been born in Fryslân. "Simmer 2000" (simmer = summer in Frisian) will carry on from July 1 through 22, 2000, all over Friesland.

Whole province to participate

Fryslân wishes to show the best it has to offer. An opening ceremony will take place on July 1 in the capital, Leeuwarden, with city-wide outdoor performances of music, dance and theatre. The closing ceremony on July 22 will consist of a large promenade concert in the Expocenter FEC, also in Leeuwarden.

The Frisian landscape forms the stage for the Frisian Festival, a coincident cultural festival, with events such as:

* Slachtedyk, July 8, a cultural marathon with the co-operation of bands and a presentation by the 55 neighboring villages;

* Pilgrims to Friesland: five visual arts projects which portray the return to Friesland in monuments and rituals; and

* *Orfeo Aqua*, the performance of Gluck's opera *Orfeo*, early in the morning on one of the Frisian lakes.

Towns and villages across the province will be the real venues for Simmer 2000. In more than 225 locales there will be concerts, shows, village festivals, sporting events, open-air performances of various kinds. There will be ice-skating in the Thialf Stadium, playing fives and korfball, a special football match in the Abe Lenstra Stadium, museum exhibitions, theatre performances by professional and amateur troupes, lectures by the Fryske Akademy, and visits to the documentation centre for geneology in the Ryksargyf.

And the food! Croquettes, stroopwafels, herring, smoked eels on crusty rolls, french fries with mayonnaise, all washed down with strong local coffee and excellent Dutch beer.

Not to forget faith

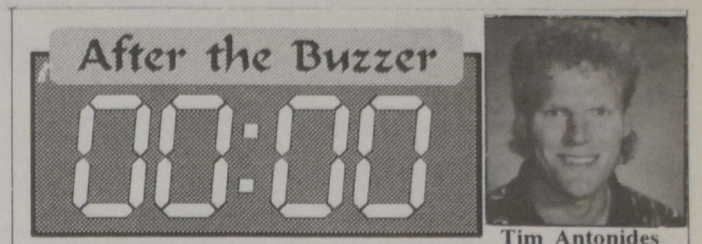
The churches of Friesland will also participate. The Frisian Church Council is organizing:

* weekly prayer meetings for youth with hymns from Taizé, in Leeuwarden;

* a trilingual liturgy book in Frisian, English and Dutch which can be used for ecumenical services during Simmer 2000;

* an ecumenical afternoon gathering on July 15 in the Grote Kerk (and likely also the Bonifatiuskerk) in Leeuwarden, treating themes of justice, emancipation, environment, reconciliation and a colorful community.

'The Complete Idiot's Guide to Sports'



Tim Antonides

Here's a newsflash for you, my friends: we live in a stupid and foolish time. Paul said that if anyone thought himself wise by the standards of the age, he should become a "fool" in order to become wise (1 Corinthians 3).

By the standards of our age, it seems an almost impossible task not to feel at least a bit wise. The culture that brought us the *Jerry Springer Show* has also done a great job of dumbing-down how we view and participate in sports.

Now, I have never received an invitation to join MENSA. I have also never been offered a fellowship to Oxford. But I have three things going for me that give me the license to detect and expose dumbness: I'm a Vancouver Canucks fan, I follow B.C. politics, and I teach kids who watch pro wrestling.

In 1999, sports fans are so dumb they've fallen for some fundamental lies upon which the wealth and success of professional sports are based. Here are three of my favorites:

1. ***You need to spend lots of cash on cool sports merchandise.*** From "official" team jerseys to neon skate laces, from autographed batting gloves to $200 basketball shoes, the list of junk you can buy is endless.

The common denominator is gross overpricing and slick be-like-the-pros packaging. People who play sports are persuaded that their performance will improve with particular technologically advanced and expensive gear.

Spectators (especially kids) are convinced that they need that disgustingly exorbitant sweatshirt to show team solidarity. What a crock.

2. ***There is a correlation between success in pro sports and integrity.*** Ask the people of Minnesota who recently elected a wrestler named Jesse ("The Body") Ventura as governor. They voted him in because he was successful, popular and had a heck of a full-nelson. Look at the immense popularity that pro athletes get for running around bouncing, hitting and shooting balls, pucks and whatnot. The fact that many of them are self-absorbed ingrates doesn't seem to matter.

People continue to look up to them and place them on some sort of other-worldly pedestal. It's time to rise and shine. Pro athletes, whether they are people of integrity or not, get paid big bucks simply because they have certain obvious gifts.

3. ***Honesty and Sportsmanship Lead to Failure.*** From early on, kids learn how to cut corners in sports by such techniques as taking a dive, intimidating opponents and blaming the ref or umpire. It's no wonder, considering where they get it from. Virtually any game in pro sports will involve some sort of dishonesty or lack of sportsmanship. It's almost ingrained into the game's fabric.

Yet if you look at the great players of pro sports, past and present, there is no shortage of those who displayed character, class, and respect: Wayne Gretzky, Michael Jordan, Billy Jean King, Mark McGwire, Cal Ripkin and John Elway are a few that come to mind. If only there was a way to convince people (especially kids) that being a jerk for the sake of advantage is actually a bad thing.

As usual, I don't have any great solutions. I'm not idealistic enough to think that anything will ever change without a strong influx of Christian leaders in the sports world. I'm simply bothered by the manner in which sports enthusiasts and consumers are being sucker-punched by principles based on pure stupidity and greed.

The rest of our culture is already thumbing its nose at discernment and self-examination. Do we have to let sports get sucked down the same tube?

Tim Antonides is a teacher and sports coach at Surrey Christian School, Surrey, B.C.

'Prime Time Prophets' reports God is back on television

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (Religion Today) – God is showing up in the scripts of some of TV's grittiest shows. Hot-tempered policeman Andy Sipowicz on ABC's *NYPD Blue* ended the season on his knees this spring, praying after the death of his wife.

NBC's *Law & Order* attorneys prosecuted a former nun for killing a young girl during an exorcism. HBO's prison series, *Oz*, showed the mother of a murdered correctional officer forgiving her son's killer before his execution.

A new weekly segment on *CNN NewsStand* aims to show why. "Prime-Time Prophets" is the brainchild of Silvia Gambardella, a freelance TV reporter and producer. She wanted to show that spiritual themes recur with at least a few writers and producers of secular prime time series. The former crime reporter, who is Catholic, watches many of the shows evangelicals consider controversial. "With all the attacks they've been getting, I started to see other things in them, solely as a viewer, scenes about God and the Bible and spirituality and family values in shows where you wouldn't expect it," she told the *Los Angeles Times*.

"In the past, writers and producers felt religion was a mortal sin for prime time. Now it's thought of not only as a divine act, but a ratings miracle," *CNN NewsStand* correspondent Robin Groth said. The cable network aired the segment after a more popular TV news magazine rejected it because it wasn't "celebrity-driven enough," Gambardella said. The 10-minute Thursday-night segments show that programs don't have to be as overtly "wholesome" as CBS's *Touched by an Angel* and WB's *7th Heaven* to gain viewers and accurately portray religious values, she said.

Pax, pax ...

PAX TV is proving that family-friendly and inspirational programming can be successful. The self-proclaimed "seventh network" has carved a niche by airing shows which its founder Home Shopping Network mogul Lowell "Bud" Paxson claims "God would want to watch." Most are reruns of popular prime-time programs such as *Touched By An Angel* and *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*.

After its first year of operation, which it celebrated in August, Pax had expanded programming to include an original series each night. Its executives hope the new shows will help the network expand beyond predominantly older viewers. It lost $90 million in 1998 and has seen low ratings compared to other networks, but will make a profit by year's end, *USA Today* said. Pax, which reaches 75 per cent of American homes, has sold nearly $100 million worth of advertising for next season.

Sandals spell out gospel message

Former major league pitcher Jerry Reed demonstrates how Shoes of The Fisherman sandals work.

Alan Doerksen

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – When you pick up a pair of Shoes of The Fisherman sandals and look at the soles, you read: SUSEJ UOY SEVOL. But when you walk on the beach with them, you will see the message JESUS LOVES YOU written in the sand. Every place footprints can be seen, this message is left by the sandals, which work like giant rubber stamps.

"These sandals were born out of the most terrifying moment in my life," says Dr. Kathleen Farrell, president of Shoes of The Fisherman, Inc. Thirty years ago, she was walking back to her dormitory on the University of Tampa (Florida) campus after a late class. Suddenly she was knocked to the ground by a stranger who had been lurking in the darkness. He jerked her to her feet, shoved her into his waiting truck, and sped off into the night.

"Terrified and weeping, I begged to be released, but the man screamed at me to be quiet and slammed my head into the passenger-side window, stunning me," Farrell recounts. He drove to a lonely orange grove and turned off the ignition.

In Farrell's dazed and horrified state, familiar and comforting words welled up from deep within her, and she began to recite aloud the 23rd Psalm.

Unexpected chord

Something struck a chord of goodness in the man – perhaps a long-ago Bible lesson or a bedtime prayer, speculates Farrell. The stranger restarted the truck, drove back to the city, and shoved her out onto the pavement. Weak-kneed and shaking, Farrell made her way back to the campus and assistance, thanking God for each and every step she took.

From that experience, reinforcing goodness became Farrell's life purpose. She is now a psychologist. She also works with Jerry Reed, a Christian businessman who is a former major league baseball star, to get the message JESUS LOVES YOU around the globe.

Advertisers take initiative to clean up television

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — Citing a lack of network programs that are acceptable for family viewing, a group of major advertisers has announced a plan to pay writers to develop family-friendly programs for consideration by the WB network.

The group of leading advertisers – including McDonalds, Sears, General Motors, IBM, Procter & Gamble and Johnson & Johnson – has agreed to underwrite the development costs of at least eight family-friendly pilots.

Jordan Levin, executive vice president of programming for the WB network, told *The Washington Times* that the unusual move was necessary because "many of Hollywood's creative people recoil from the idea of family-friendly shows."

Robert Wehling, a spokesperson for Procter & Gamble, told the *Wall Street Journal*, "We're not going to be involved in the content. We're asking that in general the shows be ones that it would be reasonable to assume a multi-generational household unit could get together and watch without embarrassment."

Messianic Jews target New Agers with TV program

BRUNSWICK, Ga. (Religion Today) – An interview show produced by Messianic Jews is airing on secular television. Brunswick, Ga.-based Messianic Vision said it has signed a contract with the GoodLife cable network to run *It's Supernatural*. The target audience is non-Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, who have an interest in angels, psychic phenomena and New Age philosophy.

During the first part of the show, Messianic Vision's Sid Roth interviews Christians who discuss, rather than preach about, topics from a biblical perspective. Roth then appears in front of a cross, draped with a Jewish prayer shawl, and explains from the Bible why Jesus is the Messiah. The program airs Sundays at 10 a.m. Eastern time.

Internet used to get Christians to tithe for poverty

CHAMPAIGN, Illinois (Religion Today) – A ministry is using its Internet site to raise awareness about poverty abroad and to challenge people to do something about it. The Champaign, Ill., group Empty Tomb, Inc., which conducts research on church-giving trends, is asking Christians to tithe. Among information on the group's site is an updated estimate of the number of children who die yearly from poverty-induced causes that could be alleviated if the affluent North American church would give more, the group says.

"Giving in the church is down. We must conclude that most in the church are just not serious" about following Jesus Christ's command to make disciples worldwide, Sylvia Ronsvalle, executive vice president of Empty Tomb, told Religion Today.

The Apostle Paul described a group that had "a form of religion but deny its power," she said. "This describes the church today. We are a consumer church. We come to church for what we can get out of it."

The "Potential Page" on the site suggests ways to help, and shows Empty Tomb's projected outcome if every church member tithed. "Incredible things would be accomplished. Right now we are contributing only $3 billion toward missions. If the church tithed, it could give $69 billion toward missions." In contrast, Ronsvalle noted that Americans, for example, now spend over $55 billion on soft drinks."

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Church

Reformed Ecumenical Council gears up for next year's quadrennial meet

Marian Van Til, with files from REC

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia – The Interim Committee of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, from June 24 to July 1 to prepare the way for next year's full assembly, which will also be in Yogyakarta. The meeting next year was originally scheduled for Jakarta, but in a climate of civil unrest in the country, Yogyakarta is considered safer. In addition, Yogyakarta is a regional centre where both the Christian Church of Java and the Central Java Synod of the Christian Church of Indonesia are headquartered.

Indonesian REC members consider Yogyakarta a more interesting cultural centre than Jakarta; there are major historic sites for Hinduism and Buddhism in the area, and also the palace of the Sultan of Yogyakarta. (The previous sultan played a key role in Indonesia's fight for independence from the Dutch in the late 1940s.)

Final negotiations are still underway for the place of the REC assembly, but the dates remain unchanged: July 14-28, 2000.

In other business of the Interim Committee:

32 court cases pending

The Interim Committee decided to acknowledge the claim of the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa (DRCA) to continue as a member of the REC. In 1995, the previous Interim Committee concluded that the DRCA was no longer a member because it had joined the Dutch Reformed Mission Church to form a new church, the Uniting Reformed Church in South Africa (URCSA) – and the Uniting Church did not wish to continue the Dutch Reformed Church's membership in the REC.

While news reports talked of the Dutch Reformed Church's withdrawal from the REC, the URCSA did not officially act on the issue. After two years of deliberation and waiting for a South African court verdict of November 1998, the Interim Committee decided that the DRCA never actually withdrew.

During those two years a segment of the DRCA refused to join the Uniting Church, which began a lengthy dispute about membership, name and property rights which eventually went to the South African courts. One court decided that the DRCA, on its own, no longer had legal standing in the country. But an appeals court reversed that decision in November 1998.

The DRCA currently has a membership of about 135 congregations, it says. There are currently 32 court cases involving local property disputes between the DRCA and the URCSA.

'No' to office in Africa

The REC Interim Committee reviewed four African cities as possible sites for the office of the REC Secretariat, which is currently housed in the United States in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

After considering the advantages and disadvantages of Johannesburg (South Africa), Harare (Zimbabwe), Gaborone (Botswana) and Nairobi (Kenya), the committee will recommend to the full REC assembly next year not to move REC offices. The request to research a possible move came from the 1996 assembly.

The Interim Committee said it could understand the symbolic significance of moving the REC's headquarters to Africa. But because of rapid communications now available (making Africa far less isolated than it once was), the committee felt the reasons for moving were not strong enough to overcome the obstacles of cost and disruption that a move of office would bring.

REC reps discuss Australian churches' unique problems

SYDNEY, Australia (REC) — Interaction between leaders of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (PCA) and the Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA) was advanced by a June visit from members of the REC Interim Committee, said all parties concerned. James Lont and Douwe Visser visited with representatives of both denominations, traveling to Sydney and to the Melbourne-Geelong area.

A variety of worship styles is part of the growing diversity in both these churches. The challenge of keeping younger and older members together is important for the PCA, while the RCA has unique problems because of its origin as a mainly Dutch immigrant church.

Lont and Visser encouraged the churches' leadership in their search for solutions, and shared their experiences from other environments. The REC representatives said that among the highlights of their Australian meetings were "valuable visits" to the seminaries of the two denominations, and a well-attended youth service.

Christian leaders 'especially vulnerable' to pornography

HARTFORD, Conn. (Religion Today) – Cable television sex tempted Jack Hayford six weeks ago, he told 12,000 men at a Promise Keepers rally in Hartford, Conn., recently. His cable system had reassigned the channel numbers, and as he surfed for CNN and ESPN, the Van Nuys, Calif., pastor ran across a scrambled X-rated station and he was tempted to stick with it to see what it offered, he said.

Indulging in pornography "is increasingly a problem" among Christian leaders, Steve Watters, an Internet research analyst for Focus on the Family, told Religion Today. Many cards, letters, and calls that come into the Colorado Springs-based ministry reflect the problem, he said, and cable television and the Internet are two primary sources of temptation.

An unrecognized problem

Fifteen per cent of Americans who use the Internet use it for pornography and five per cent of all who use it are addicted, Watters said, quoting recent statistics. Ten per cent of the calls Focus on the Family receives from Christian leaders are about pornography, he says. "We believe that the problem may be more widespread than these numbers indicate because many don't realize they have a problem or just don't want to make it known."

Christian leaders are "especially vulnerable" to pornography, Watters said. "Pastors as a group can be drained in their role as shepherd. After a long weekend of giving, there is no one around on Monday morning to talk to. Now something that has been off-limits is available privately. It seems like a safe area to explore. Some justify their exploring by wanting to know what the problem is all about, and then get sucked in themselves."

Focus on the Family started the Pure Intimacy website to help addicts from all walks of life free themselves from pornography, and to give advice on how to deal with loved ones who are addicted, Watters said. Most of those who have taken a self-test on the site "have gotten back results saying they do have a problem," he said.

No modem needed

Focus purchased $24,000 (US) in advertising on the LookSmart search engine, funded by revenue from Focus founder James Dobson's pre-execution interview with Ted Bundy in which the serial murderer blamed pornography for his behavior. LookSmart was chosen because the company refuses to sell advertising space to pornography suppliers.

The Focus ad, which ran for 30 days, appeared when users keyed in the words sex, nude, porn, pornography and addiction. If they typed in the word sex, the ad said: "Great sex does not require a modem," and if they clicked, they arrived at a portion of the site dealing with intimacy, Watters said. While the ad ran, 1,500 people came to the site, and 13 set up local counseling as a result of the visit, he said. "We know that our campaign caused reflection on the problem even if they didn't visit our site."

The ad's message is that intimacy offers more long-term satisfaction than the short-term pleasure in pornographic sex, Watters said. Focus wanted to "use the same medium that creates the temptation to offer a private solution. We didn't want to play up Focus on the Family for those who may be prejudiced against it. We also wanted a resource for Christian leaders."

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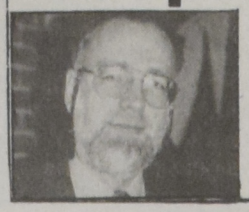
Chapter & Verse



Al Wolters
Mary S. Hulst Antonides

"[I said,] 'And you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars.' Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this? Now therefore I tell you that I will not drive them out before you; they will be thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you." (Judges 2:1-3, NIV)

The story of the Israelites' conquest of the promised land is the story of how God finally gave the descendants of Abraham the land which he had promised to the patriarchs centuries earlier. As told in the book of Joshua, the story constantly emphasizes that it is God who takes the initiative, who acts as their commander-in-chief, and who gives his people the victory.

It is also God who, in his terrible judgment on the abominations practiced by the Canaanites, takes the lead in placing these pagan nations under the ban, that is, under a judgment of complete extermination. Yet by the end of the book of Joshua, because of the faithlessness of the Israelites, there remained substantial pockets of the Canaanite population which were not destroyed.

Destruction and grace

This failure on the part of Israel, however, is taken up as part of God's providential plan. There is a sense in which God himself lets these pagan remnants remain in the promised land. As the text quoted above puts it: "Therefore I myself will not drive them out before you."

It is instructive to compare the various passages in Scripture where God speaks of not immediately or not completely destroying the pagan inhabitants of the promised land. The first is found in Exodus 23:27-30, when the Israelites are still encamped at Mount Sinai. There God speaks as follows:

I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every nation you encounter. I will make all your enemies turn their backs and run. I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites, and Hittites out of your way. But I will not drive them out in a single year, because the land would become desolate and the wild animals too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased enough to take possession of the land.

Here God says that it is out of concern for the Israelites – and for the land itself – that he will not immediately wipe out the pagan nations. He will wait until the Israelites are numerous enough to take complete possession of their inheritance.

God's own ends

In another passage, not long after the verses quoted at the head of this column, the Lord puts it this way (Judg 2:20-22):

Because this nation has violated the covenant that I laid down for their forefathers and has not listened to me, I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations Joshua left when he died. I will use them to test Israel and see whether they keep the way of the Lord and walk in it as their forefathers did.

Here God says that he will use the results of Israel's disobedience for his own ends: to check what religious mettle she was made of. Would she be infected by these pagan remnants, or would she remain faithful to the covenant?

This use of "testing" is similar to the one mentioned in our first passage, where God said that the remaining Canaanites would be thorns in the Israelites' side, and even that their pagan gods would be a snare for Israel. The fruit of covenant disobedience remains as a test of covenant obedience.

Two very different vantage points

It is amazing how the Bible can present the same historical facts from such very different, apparently contradictory viewpoints. The incomplete destruction of the Canaanites is both an act of disobedience on Israel's part and an act of providence on the Lord's part. And he acts both out of concern for his people and in order to put them to the test. It seems very strange.

Yet when we stop to consider the historical facts of our own individual and collective lives, we soon realize that these facts, too, can often be seen, with the eye of faith, from each of these angles. God acts in and through our disobedience both to help and to challenge us.

Dr. Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario. He is married to Alice, the manager of the Redeemer College bookstore.

Churches host prayer summit in Charlottetown

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO – As the new millennium approaches, two congregations concerned about Canada's future are hosting an interdenominational prayer summit this month. The "summit" will take place September 30 to October 3 in Charlottetown, P.E.I., to repent of national sins and to seek God's will for the future.

COURTESY JOSEPH GRUBB

Pastor Joseph Grubb

The idea came from Pastor Joseph Grubb of the Toronto Christian International Fellowship (TCIF), an independent congregation. His church holds weekly prayer meetings which focus on Canada. Church members pray for the needs of the country and for "repentance, for genuine revival and awakening," explains Grubb.

Grubb believes he sensed God leading his church to organize a prayer summit in Charlottetown because that is the "birthplace of Confederation." But to set up the summit, the church felt it should find a sister church in P.E.I. with which to work.

Grubb says his church prayed: "Lord, if you want this in the birthplace of Confederation, we need a divine connection here." A connection was made with David Filsinger, the pastor of Sherwood Church of the Nazarene in Charlottetown. Filsinger had worked in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., and was known by a member of TCIF. Sherwood Church agreed to help, and freed Filsinger from other duties for several weeks so that he could focus completely on co-planning the summit.

'Praying and obeying'

Grubb sees Charlottetown as the place where the *modern* nation of Canada was born. "In no way do we want to offend the First Nations," he clarifies. He and his church have encouraged First Nations groups across Canada to attend the summit. "This is a trans-denominational thing," he says. He expects Christians from as far afield as an Anglican church in B.C., a French-language congregation in Quebec, scattered Pentecostal congregations and various local P.E.I. churches to participate.

Four objectives

Grubb and Filsinger say the summit has four objectives: to gather Christians from all parts of the country at Canada's birthplace "in order to earnestly seek the Lord and his destiny for us today"; to "encounter God" and receive "fresh vision, strategic direction and timely marching orders for the Canadian church"; to "follow the Lord's direction in worship, group prayer and repentance" for Canada's sins as a nation; and to "record, publish and then distribute this part of the Lord's vision for Canada in 1999 and beyond."

The organizers are convinced that the Canada Prayer Summit will be "very strategic and significant in God's prophetic calendar and purpose for Canada." In an invitation sent out to Christian leaders in Canada, Grubb and Filsinger wrote: "The praying and obeying Canadian Church will play the most significant role in determining the destiny of our country." However, they admit that it is "only one part of God's overall plan to position the Canadian Church for what's next."

They conclude, "As the Lord gathered the original fathers of Confederation to establish our nation, so he is gathering spiritual fathers and mothers today to seek him to preserve and revive it."

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WHAT ARE YOU GUYS WEARING?

THE SECRET OF MEN AND THEIR CLOTHES

The industry can safely ignore us and target our wives and girlfriends. Women get to dress guys up like oversized Ken dolls (like Leonard Batterink, pictured above).

Leonard Batterink

Most men, I think, will never admit to caring about clothes. Women can spend time and emotional energy on their wardrobe. They can page through catalogues and women's wear journals and style themselves into a specific fashion type — the arty, funky, Annie Hall type; the prim, efficient Allie-McBeal-in-front-of-the-jury type, the flowered, braided Earth Mother type; or something else. Women can make a project of expressing themselves through their clothes, and there's no embarrassment about it. But guys? I don't think so.

If asked, most guys will say that clothes are for keeping the weather out and that shopping for clothes has all the appeal of a night at Uncle Vern and Aunt Norma's watching slides from their trip to Vegas. Even your teeth fall asleep with boredom. The shopping had better get done quick and fast. Or better yet, let someone else do it. Just flip through the catalogue and check off this and that so your wife can order it over the phone. The conversation goes something like this:

"You need a new jacket."

"I suppose."

"Here's a page of them. Do you like this one?"

"Sure."

"Green on gray, or blue on gray?"

"Order them both. We'll decide when they come in and send the other one back."

"You'll need pants too — with the jacket."

"Sure. Order gray. They'll go with either jacket."

"Here's a page of shirts."

"Get one of those, and one of those, and one of those. I'll keep two. And order them with a 16-inch neck. The fifteen-and-a-halfs keep getting smaller."

There's no humiliation in a fitting room and it's all over in about 10 minutes. If only Uncle Vern and Aunt Norma could get done that fast.

OVERSIZED KEN DOLLS

My guess is that most marketing departments have given up on guys. They've figured out that we're indifferent and inept and perfectly happy about it. Indifference and ineptitude are points of pride. And in any case, most clothing – including men's clothing – is bought by women. The industry can safely ignore us and target our wives and girlfriends. Women get to dress guys up like oversized Ken dolls, and the guys can go after powerboats, big trucks, season tickets to the Vancouver Canucks and other goodies for boys who never grew up.

Most guys wouldn't be caught dead fussing with clothes. It's prissy, dandyish, maybe not even normal. At least, that's the way most guys come on. I'm not sure it's honest, though.

I've done no research and I have no statistics, but it seems to me that the apathy is mostly for show. We might be lazy about clothes, but we do care about them more than we like to admit. Like our sisters, we want to belong, to fit into a group; and clothes are one way of applying for membership.

I went to Calvin College in the mid-to-late-1970s. The '60s were over by then. Woodstock, the Summer of Love, the peace movement, the *Bananer* (that one-time Christian Reformed paragon of parody) – they were all fading memories, and Calvin's campus had only a few holdover student radicals. Most of *them* hung around the philosophy department taking courses in Hegel and Kant, smoking pipes and growing beards (or at least trying to grow beards), wearing old tweed jackets from the Salvation Army, half-a-size too big, and looking like clothes meant nothing at all to them. Clothes are trifling things when you're working out the problem of being and non-being.

But you couldn't help noticing how so many of the student radical philosophers looked the same – the baggy jackets, the beards and pipes. They were a type as much as the jocks in sweat-suits-and-training-shoes, or the preppy pre-law Young Republican crowd that took over from the radicals. Were they – like everyone else – looking over their shoulders to make sure the uniform fit?

YOU'VE GOT TO DRESS RIGHT

Take the way guys dress for church nowadays. The business suit has been disappearing from Sunday worship for the last 10 or 20 years. The uniform now is twill pants, a denim shirt (tie optional, but only if it has Daffy Duck on it) and casual brown shoes. In some places you'll look like a traditionalist geek if you wear a suit, and during "Praise and Worship" with your hand lifted (if your church does such things), the jacket will ride up your back, the sleeves will slide to your elbows and you'll look ridiculous. If you go to the Church Where Great Things Are Happening, you've got to dress right.

Clothes don't matter ultimately, of course. God looks not at the outward appearance, but at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7), and we would be wise to learn the habit too. But as long as we live and work together in groups, we'll care about fitting in, and we'll use clothes to do it. Guys too. We just won't admit it.

Len Batterink is the well-dressed, preppy-looking pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Duncan, B.C. He's well-dressed because his wife has a good eye for clothes.

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Dress Talks

Turn your back on that mirror, it's all in vain

Jay Reay

Admiring myself in the hall mirror for an hour or two last week I seemed to hear the words "Behold, all is vanity..." softly in my perfectly formed left ear. I looked around, but I was alone, just me and my rather fetching reflection.

Perhaps, I thought, it was God giving me a warning about the fleeting nature of life. You know, something along the lines of the Roman slave whispering, "Remember thou art mortal" in the ears of the latest hero enjoying a triumphal parade in the Eternal City.

That dimly heard reminder of the fragility of the human condition, from Ecclesiastes 1:14 (not my favorite book of the Bible, it must be said), turned me a bit cold for a moment.

But perhaps it was only my wife, with a nifty bit of voice projection from the sitting room, catching me unawares in a moment of self-admiration. If it were, she was using "vain" in the modern sense of being conceited about one's appearance. The fact that in my case such conceit may be justified didn't lift my feeling of gloom.

Whatever it was, it was timely. I had been mulling over the managing editor's command to come up with a 1000 words on vanity for this issue discussing clothing, "and you'd better make it funny," she said. I wonder why she thought of me![*Mr. Reay was actually asked to write 750 words, but his vanity got in the way.* **Ed.**]

Meaning evolved

My Cambridge Bible Concordance lists 20 or so mentions of the words "vain" or "vanity" in the King James Version. It is important to bear in mind, of course, that many words have changed their meanings since this most familiar version of the Bible was translated, by committee, into the Shakespearean English of the early 17th century.

Then, "vanity" referred to the fleeting nature of human life on earth. My 1983 British edition of the NIV uses the words "meaningless" (Eccles. 1:14) and "futility" (Eph. 4:17) where the KJV uses "vanity."

"Vanity" as being overly concerned with appearances, deservedly or not, is quite a recent usage (of course the meanings are connected: appearances ultimately *are* fleeting and meaningless). But thinking about obsession with one's appearance is appropriate in the context of this issue, because clothes – what we choose and how we wear them – are very often one of the major outward signs of our vanity.

Vanity in 101 sizes

Vanity comes in many shapes and sizes, not all of them nice to behold, but most are pretty harmless. For instance, there is "vanity publishing" in which the writer covers all the costs of print, production and distribution of his or her work, with no risk to the publisher at all. Less expensive, but somehow more egotistical, are "vanity" license plate for cars.

Vanity is something I know a lot about. Perfect I may be in most ways, I must admit I am very vain. I may not be funny about it today, however; sorry, my vanity is too important to me for levity.

In my case, one form of simple-minded vanity can be blamed on my genes. It comes from my Viking ancestors who loved to pillage the natives on the northeast coast of Britain, looting the monasteries and burning the villages. I've adopted their means of ego-gratification in a slightly less violent form, of course. I like nothing better on an autumn evening than the satisfying sight of a well-constructed fire of leaves and garden detritus. I bow to no one in the perfection of my *al fresco* conflagrations – a sort of vanitiy of the bonfires, if you will.

A Viking helmet? Doesn't a Calvinist get a crown?

Milking every syllable

Apart from happy hours consulting a looking glass to check that my grey sideburn wings look sufficiently professorial, I love the sound of my own voice. I don't mean that I monopolize every conversation (although that too). I really do mean that the tone and timbre of my own speaking voice is something I like to hear. God has given me a resonant light baritone and I milk it for every syllable, every verbal and vocal sound it can make.

This can be very irritating for other people, but unlike my other sinful failings, it is relatively harmless. Because though our vanity may bore others, it doesn't hurt anyone, does it? It's just a very human foible. The Lord gives us a pretty nose, or wonderful hair, or perfect pitch, or high intelligence, or just very good taste in curtains, and being vain about it surely is just an understandable recognition of those gifts.

Harmless, isn't it?

Vanity about our clothes, our dress sense, is particularly harmless and inconsequential, surely? After all, at worst it is just a waste of our own money and time.

The devotee of designer clothing can claim that his, or more likely her (men having the monopoly on some other sins) excessive attention to her wardrobe creates work and wealth. The inmates of sewing sweatshops from New York to New Delhi see rather more of the work than the wealth, however.

Perhaps the pampered darlings of the Calvin Klein jeans and Versace cocktail dress set might think rather less of their saintly brands if they saw just how their clothes were made.

But such sartorial vanity is harmless enough. Or is it? Have you noticed that all the best dictators have great dress sense?

Best-dressed despots

Hitler designed some of the S.S. uniforms, and splendid they were, too. Much better than Churchill's shapeless, dull blue boiler suit. Hitler's tyranny of half Europe was certainly assisted by the recruiting potential of his uniforms, from dark brown shirts ("this season's black") to death's-head cap badges in purloined silver.

Napoleon's Old Guard looked very stylish, all French blue and white. Something Coco Chanel might have whisked up on a weekend morning in Montmartre, cigarette in one hand, champagne in the other – "A box pleat 'ere, a lace jabot zer and, poof! All Europe will be at your feet, Citizen Emperor!"

Uncle Joe Stalin may have always dressed in a peasant blouse to remind his people he was one of the boys (and they'll be round to break your legs if you don't keep quiet) but the uniforms of the Red Army, and even more, the Russian Navy, were exquisite poems of color, cut, and shiny metal bits. Even if they did fall apart after one cleaning.

The flashy uniform has always been a siren call to disenchanted youth to join the colors in some dubious enterprise or other, shoring up another tin-pot dictatorship. The vanity of youth has ever been the opportunity of the corrupt, and as the violence grows, the need for the leader to cut a dashing figure seems to increase with it.

Look at Iraq. Saddam Hussein has a natty olive-green uniform just too perfectly creased ever to have seen combat. Libya's Colonel Qhaddafi dresses in beautifully embroidered robes you could die for – and many have. And Emperor Bokassa, the recently deposed and completely unmissed creator of the Central African Empire, looked quite the ticket dishing the dirt in ermine and pearls.

Vanity and coercion go hand-in-glove

So, clothes are often a visible sign of an underlying vanity, and that vanity is not so harmless in the wrong hands. We often use clothes to disguise our insecurities, to become someone we're not.

But worse than that, an over-weening concern about what is "proper" seems to go hand-in-glove with the temptation to force our will upon others. Consider the strict dress codes of some very conservative Christian, Jewish and Islamic communities.

Not that we, with *our* exquisitely manicured hands, would force anyone to adopt a dress code they didn't share with us, would we? We need to look at ourselves in that alluring mirror from time to time to see if we are forcing our sense of propriety on others. We might see a less than pretty sight.

Jay Reay, when not looking in the mirror, is a knowledge management consultant who lives near Oxford, England. He has been a counselor with a Church of England home-church group.

Dress Talks

Christian kids and clothing:

Overcoming peer pressure

An interview with Helen Sterk by Marian Van Til

On August 18 and 21, Marian Van Til interviewed Dr. Helen Sterk, professor of communication arts and sciences at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Sterk has a particular interest in dress-related issues which she came by via what she calls her "general interest in rhetoric by and about women, especially popular culture rhetoric."

During the 1989-90 academic year Sterk was a fellow at Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship, during which time she researched the history of fashion. "I examined what was worn, why, and analyzed some of the implicit power messages that one's dress sends," Sterk explains. "That year I also developed a slide presentation that I still do. I'll be doing an updated version for Calvin's noon-time [lecture] series in the fall."

"I'm not a costume expert," she notes, "and I don't necessarily see myself as a fashionable dresser" [though others would dispute that]. "But I like good clothes. I try to dress appropriately but still try to have a sense of fun and playfulness about it."

"Modesty involves sexuality but also financial issues."

That sense of playfulness about clothing is particularly important for Christians, Sterk believes, but is often missing in the Christian dress equation. It is part of creativity, which involves "a sense of aesthetic beauty and a realization that God doesn't call us to be drab." Sterk sees such creativity as one of the three principles which should concern Christians when they choose their clothing. The other two are modesty and stewardship.

All three potentially conflict with each other, Sterk admits. "In terms of what our culture suggests, what counts as fashionable is often at odds with stewardship, and also at odds with modesty. All three come into play like balls you're juggling." She admits that that juggling act isn't easy, and may take thought and practice, especially when dealing with what our children wear.

The need to belong to the group is strong in every healthy human heart. God created us social beings. But kids, especially, want and need to "belong." And, like it or not, what kids wear (including hairstyle, glasses, and if age-appropriate, make-up) can play a large role in whether they are accepted by their peers.

"I have a son, 12, and a daughter who is 10, going on 20," says Sterk, laughing. "Both like to wear clothes that are like what their friends wear. I remember enough of grade school myself to remember why that is. You don't want to stand out so much that you become a pariah. If we adults pooh-pooh that I think it's a mistake. We need to give kids a certain sense of honor, recognition that they are in a peer group. Why should you as an adult go out of your way to make sure your kid doesn't fit into a peer group?

"We should not put our kids in a position where they'll be ridiculed. We should find a way to help our kids not necessarily stand out for their fashion sense, but to let them fit in. Life is hard enough for a kid. That means lots and lots of talk with our children about it because kids don't pick up things implicitly."

Sterk talked of stewardship first in outfitting one's children with clothing which both they and their peers think constitutes the "right look."

"We don't need to go and buy name brand clothing just because they want it," Sterk asserts. There are creative ways to have well-dressed kids who will "fit in," and Sterk offers several approaches which have worked, and are working, with her own children.

"I may tell my son, 'I have $30 for this item. If you want a name brand that costs more, you pay the rest.'"

"We'll also look for sales, end-of-season sales, especially. Or I'll say: 'This season you may have one kind of "splurge thing".' We'll pay attention to the 'right look' but parents don't have to spend excessive amounts to do it. You can do this within the family budget. You have to say: 'Let's see how far we can stretch this. I have a friend who is the most creative shopper I have ever known, and for very little money she is able to make her kids look like they've got all the right stuff" – part of the having creative fun with clothing that Sterk stresses.

"Here [in Grand Rapids, Michigan] there are a lot of consignment shops, which are great places to get good clothes for little money. For instance, I have clothes my kids have outgrown, but the clothes are in very good shape. The shop will sell it for me and I'll get a cut. The quality of clothing is good. It's *the* place to go to buy a prom dress." (Though, she adds, "for your daughter's sake I wouldn't recommend going to the consignment shop in your own town to buy one.") Even garage sales can turn up really nice clothes.

If kids are tuned into what kind of clothes are "right," according to the popular crowd, they've also learned to be snobbish about where those right clothes are bought. "Kids will ask other kids, 'Where did you get your clothes?' not necessarily because they want to go out and buy something like it, but because if you don't shop at the right stores, you're not cool."

But there are also ways around that, Sterk says.

"When my son is asked that, he'll deflect it, or say: 'What's it *to* ya?' It doesn't bother him."

Sterk's children attend CSI Christian schools, of which there are dozens in Grand Rapids. (Christian Schools International is the umbrella organization for the Christian schools which are part of the Christian education movement

Dr. Helen Sterk

begun early in the century by then Reformed, Dutch immigrant parents; though still largely supported by Reformed parents, in many parts of the U.S. and Canada these schools are now denominationally and ethnically diverse.) "There are [Christian] schools in the various socio-economic classes here," she says. "We happen to be in the highest one and we just can't compete, so we don't try.

"We Christians haven't been able to escape the materialism of our culture. Unless we teach our kids a sense of stewardship, and are very explicit about it, our kids aren't going to pick that up."

But we adults also have to practice what we preach. "If kids see their parents spending a lot on clothes and not being consistent, that's an un-Christian message."

It's challenging to poor people to find clothing that lets their kids fit in. But it can be done. For example, if you find the *one* thing to help the kids fit in – whether Adidas shoes, or whatever – that can go a long way. I sound like an accommodationist, I know. But this does matter to our kids.

"This stewardship issue should be a conscious part of a Christian parents choices in their children's clothing. Even if you're wealthy, spending a lot of money on clothing is not good stewardship. There are better uses of money. That can

"Kids will ask other kids, 'Where did you get your clothes?' not necessarily because they want to go out and buy something like it, but because if you don't shop at the right stores, you're not cool."

be talked about with kids, too. They can be told: we're going to give x amount to missions, or to this Christian cause, and that leaves x amount for clothes. But that's the way it's going to be."

Gender issues come into play a great deal in buying and wearing clothing for teens (and for adults too), but Sterk's principles of creativity, stewardship and modesty still apply.

"Boys can get away with fewer clothes, and the pressure on boys is less," says Sterk. "My son wears black and white and grey, and khaki pants; he has a few things he really likes, and wears them all the time. His friends are the same. But it's different for girls. There's so much more variety. Every day my daughter must wear something different. And then there are the novelty items that everybody 'has to have' or you're out of it. She's headed to 5th grade.

"Girls at that age are starting to think more in terms of their looks. I work with her in trying to be playful and creative in the way she dresses, having fun with her clothing, and she enjoys it. She, luckily, has a good friend who thinks the way she does.

"It strikes me when I observe the kids in her class, they're relatively homogeneous. But that could be the function of the school she goes to. We need to help these kids develop character, and make choices that reflect Christian values."

"It's different for girls. There's so much more variety. Every day my daughter must wear something different."

"Regarding modesty, I can tell you what I'm working at in my family," Sterk says. "One of the things that kids don't get – and I know I didn't either when I was young – is that modesty is not so much in your mind, as in the mind of others. You need to teach kids to think in terms of how others see them: 'Am I wearing clothes that let others draw inferences that are sexually explicit?' If so, that's not the way Christians are to be in the world.

"With things that permanently mark your body, I would say that before a person is 18 a parent can simply say: 'You won't do that. This is not something that is modest, or wise, or what God asks of us.

"Tank tops with the spaghetti straps are *the* big deal here this summer. They can reveal more than the girls think they're revealing. (And I would hope a 10-year-old doesn't understand the details of sexual attraction.) My mom used to say: 'You're not to wear short skirts, period. But if you make it just a prohibition and don't explain it, they're going to fight you. They might anyway, but you can reason with them, and explain how others may be seeing them; then at least they'll think about it."

What if ugly clothes are fashionable? "Parents must be consistent, gentle, loving, and try to encourage the child to move beyond such a trend, such as wearing only black," says Sterk.

Then there's the issue of hairstyle, jewelry and "decoration" such as body piercing and tattooing. "With things that permanently mark your body, I would say that before a person is 18 a parent can simply say: 'You won't do that. This is not something that is modest, or wise, or what God asks of us. You're in my house, and as long as you are, you won't do that.' But I admit I don't have a great answer for this question.

"All this has to do with kids' identity, and identity they want to project to the world. Parents must give feedback on what that identity is or should be. And put the brakes on if it gets out of hand."

As an aside, Sterk says: "I'm kind of a fan of school uniforms. I think that uniforms even out the economic difference. You can still express individuality in the small things. But I know my kids would hate them."

"Some of what *we* think is godly is also cultural. It comes within the context of our Christian community. Modesty involves sexuality but also financial issues. To dress terribly beyond the means of those around you is immodest. We're in communities. We have a responsibility to our [Christian] community. If we are far wealthier than our community it's immodest to live far above the means of our community."

In terms of Christian guidelines – in terms of Creation, Fall, Redemption – God made things beautiful. God did not make a black and white world. God did not make a boring, plain-dressing world. We can take a cue from that. But sin is in the world. People project capitalism, consumption, sexuality. We need to be aware of those, and not just buy into what our culture says is okay. And that's where stewardship enters, too. You find a way to do what has authentic meaning to you as a human being, *and* that which gives glory to God.

Clothing and gender:
Do males and females dress too much alike?

Marian Van Til

If you think that those male and female teenagers hanging out together at the mall look almost interchangeable, or if you wonder whether women "should be" wearing pants because trousers are really for men, or if you're uncomfortable with your son wearing an earing (or two) or your daughter wearing a tattoo, you might be surprised to learn that gender sameness and gender transfer in clothing is not a modern phenomenon.

In Middle Eastern dress in Bible times men and women wore identical inner garments, and outer garments which were very similar — it was mostly the accoutrements and "accessories" which differed between men and women and outwardly distinguished their dress.

From then till now, both sexes wore and wear robes of a type which we in Western culture most often associate with women. There is a levitical prohibition against men and women wearing each other's clothing, but the implication is that the prohibition was against doing that for the sake of impersonating the other gender.

Rules for the fashion game

It wasn't until the late Middle Ages in Western civilization that men and women began to dress very differently, says Helen Sterk. And then, it was the men who dressed extravagantly, and more flashily and gaudily than the women. "The men and women who were playing the fashion game played it in the courts," says Sterk. "Both had a level of power, in a playing field of leisure and certain aesthetic norms. This was tied to the economy, to male-female roles in the economy." When (gentle)men took on waged labor and began to work in the public realm, from perhaps the 18th to the mid-20th century, men's clothing became quite functional. "But during that time, women, to gain power, had to get the eye of these powerful men," she says. "Women had been relegated to a play land and they needed to attract men, so their clothing became designed to attract."

In the last several decades women have gained economic power and their clothing has become more functional – that is, the women's clothing associated with acquiring economic power has become more functional.

Concludes Sterk, "Women's styles now change so rapidly, men's less so. Men and women now dress almost interchangeably – again. When you're not in a waged economy, dress does not need to be gender specific."

Dress Talks

Mad River madness

Eco-friendly clothing materializes from one relentless woman's dream

Diane Klein

Streets lined with century-old maples and stately Victorian homes might give visitors to Creemore, Ontario, the wrong impression. Don't go thinking it's one of those quaint Upper Canada towns which has successfully avoided the 20th century in order to snuggle down on the banks of the Mad River in the lap of comfortable country nostalgia. It isn't.

Take a glance down the main street. The Creemore Springs Brewing Company is producing a clean, full-bodied lager with pure cold water from local springs; a polished copper brewing tank glows in the brewery's front window. (Their product is brewed without additives, so froth quaffers know they have to keep their Creemore Springs lager cold in order to preserve it.) Other local entrepreneurs manufacture some of Canada's most beautiful log homes from the hearty softwood forests along the Mad River; or transform the clay from its banks into beautiful and unusual pottery items.

PHOTOS COURTESY MAD RIVER CLOTHING COMPANY

A girl models a reverse French terry pullover made of 100 per cent unbleached, undyed cotton, and beach pants made from striped cotton chambray.

Others repair old clocks and watches; or hand carve and gold leaf the typical Creemore name plaques for local businesses and homes. But amble off the main street for a moment, into the Mad River Clothing Company, and meet Michelle Pothier, its founder and the inspiration behind its concept of responsible clothing production.

A double standard

Pothier is full of energy and passionate about her own work ethic. The Mad River Clothing Company, manufacturer of high quality children's wear, is not about making a quick return, she'll tell you; it's about producing a responsible product in a responsible manner, with concern for both the social aspects of clothing manufacture as well as respect for the environment.

Employees in the garment industry have been predominantly women, and they have historically been overworked and underpaid, asserts Pothier. "Somehow," she claims, "men making cars has become worth more in our society than women making jeans. There is still little protection for seamstresses. Women are still being exploited in sweatshops, even in Toronto, and across Canada and the U.S."

She likens their condition to the more-publicized Third World situations in which a large sportswear firm, for instance, might pay such pitifully small wages that workers cannot meet their monthly living expenses. (Yet you know how much you have to pay for a pair of their basketball shoes here in North America when your son or daughter has worn out his or her previous pair!)

"I can't do much about these sad situations," laments Pothier, "but I do have some control in my own little corner. Women who work for me are not mistreated."

Flawlessly practical

Employees of the Mad River Clothing Company are stay-at-home mothers who earn roughly 50 per cent more than minimum wage. They are free to balance their home life and work life in the way which suits them best. Pothier is a member of the Fair Trade Federation, a North American organization which locates and works with fair-dealing suppliers in developing nations. But no one is doing this for North American textile workers, she claims.

"That's why I support a small group of women here in what they do well: stay home and care for their children. It's a bit of humanity in an industry which is cold and automated." She herself sews all the buttons on the clothes which her employees manufacture. "I couldn't ask anyone else to sew on buttons," she says. "It's too boring."

As a result of such enlightened management, employees of the Mad River Clothing Company take pride in the work they do. This pride is tangible in the flawlessly practical and beautiful children's clothing which they produce.

Clean, organic cotton

There's another part to this story. In this unusual boutique you'll find nothing but "eco-friendly" clothing made of natural fibres. Cotton, as a plant, has many natural predators; for this reason, cotton producers have developed a wide range of herbicides and pesticides for the protection of their crops. (According to Pothier, while cotton represents only three per cent of the world's total crop production it uses 26 per cent of the world's pesticides.) The environment suffers from this abuse. So do the workers in the cotton fields. So do the cotton fibres. And so, undoubtedly, do our bodies and those of our children when we wear cotton clothing.

But there are now a few American cotton growers, concerned about the impact of these chemicals, who are producing "organic cotton." This is cotton which is grown without the application of pesticides or synthetic fertilizers (on land which has been free of these pollutants for at least seven years). "I'm trying to educate consumers about organic cotton," says Pothier. "Especially for our children. It's not fair to them to pollute the planet, and not fair to force them to wear fabric which has caused such pollution and which itself may be polluted."

Hemp: the 'new' old material

Fabric made from hemp may soon be causing a revolution in the Canadian clothing industry. First of all, it is a versatile fibre, capable of being used in any of the ways in which cotton is now used: knits for T-shirts, denim for jeans, corduroy for slacks and jackets, terrycloth for towels. Secondly, it can now be grown in Canada (this is the plant from which marijuana comes, but farmers are allowed to grow controlled amounts for the production of goods. It being grown in Canada makes it cheaper than other natural fibres which must be imported, e.g., cotton and linen.)

Thirdly, hemp is a weed. Weeds don't require herbicides or pesticides because they themselves kill everything in their path: no chemical interventions are required. This provides both an environmental and an economic advantage: no chemicals to pollute the earth or add to the price of production. So hemp is a terrific environmental alternative even to organic cotton, which is 50 per cent more expensive than traditionally grown cotton.

Pop bottles to warm you

It's hard to imagine a fabric made from old recycled plastic pop bottles, but that's Ecospun® Polar Fleece. "It's made from at least 89 per cent post-consumer waste, and its manufacture keeps hundreds of thousands of otherwise non- recyclable plastic bottles out of landfill," explains Pothier. Liquid plastic from melted bottles is blown into thin filaments which dry immediately in the air. They are then made into yarn for knitting or weaving.

A boy models a T-shirt colored with vegetable dyes, and beach pants made of natural hemp.

The Mad River Clothing Company has come up with attractive alternatives in manufacturing. The result is well-made, durable, ecologically sound products – but expensive ones, both to purchase and to produce.

"The bottom line is growing," says Pothier. "Our future plans show us making a profit. And our investors are patient. They'll wait, because the bottom line isn't what comes first here." In the meantime, can Pothier afford to keep doing what she's doing? "Considering the universal scheme of things," she answers, "we can't afford *not* to do this."

Diane Klein is marketing and promotions director for **Christian Courier**. *Until recently, she lived in Creemore, Ontario.*

Dress Talks

Do you know where your clothes have been?

Becoming aware of fashion sweatshops

Cathy Majtenyi

September is that time of year when parents wander down the isles of their favorite clothing stores scooping up handfuls of "back-to-school" specials for their back-to-school children.

Teenagers rifle through the latest in Nike wear, picking those sweats, shoes and T-shirts that will give them the "Just Do It" edge. Harried mothers and fathers treat themselves to checkered shirts and jeans, perfect for long walks in the country.

In the rush to dress for the fall, shoppers need to stop and reflect on the hands that stitched the clothes and shoes that end up in our closets. Behind the glittering image of success, fun and achievement associated with certain brand names is often a painful reality for the people who actually make the clothing.

"It's important to think of the conditions of these young women who make the clothing, especially since they are about the same age as teenagers here," says Bob Jeffcott, spokesperson for the Labour Behind the Label Coalition, a Toronto-based group which monitors the conditions of clothing workers.

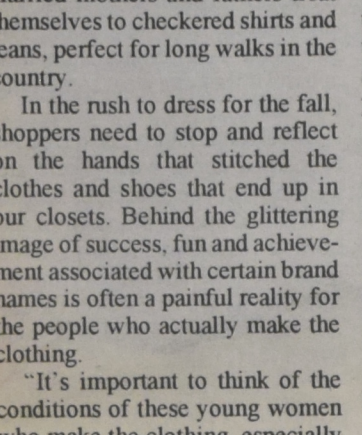
In most cases, companies are able to wash their hands of any labor or human rights violations by contracting and sub-contracting companies in desperately poor countries to perform the manual labor.

For four years, Cicih Sukaesih glued rubber soles together at a Nike-contracted factory called Sunghwadunia in West Java, Indonesia. With no gloves and a thin mask, she had to slap together 2,500 rubber soles in one hour or face being forced to work overtime. Sukaesih was allowed to make only one mistake a week, which came with a fine that would take her four hours of work to pay off. The young woman was often yelled at and humiliated. She had to ask permission to use the bathroom and promise to make up the lost time. The wage from her eight to 14-hour-a-day job barely covered her food and rent.

"The 'Just Do It' that we know on the shop floor is quite different than the 'Just Do It' you know on television," Sukaesih said while on a speaking tour in Toronto two years ago.

Sukaesih, who was fired in 1992 by the Nike contractor, along with 23 fellow workers after they tried to organize a union, recalled her shock when she learned that she was paid about $2.08 to make a pair of Nike shoes that sold for $120 in Canada.

Nike spokesperson Michelle McSorley explained at the time that it was the Indonesian government that had fired the workers in order to restore order. She also said that Nike had put into place a Code of Conduct, a document that outlines basic rights and standards a corporation promises to adhere to as they deal with their workers, communities and the environment. But Nike, like many other companies, had failed to enforce, monitor or communicate their Code of Conduct in the companies they contract, observers had found.



A protest poster by an anti-sweathop organization.

Happens many times over

Sukaesih's experience has been echoed many times in various factories around the world. Charles Kernaghan, executive director of the New York-based National Labor Committee, reported in late 1996 that Haitian workers who sewed clothing for the Disney company made approximately $2.40 a day; from that, workers' transportation and lunch were deducted.

At the 1996 Jesuit Centre gathering, Kernaghan had described an earlier trip to Haiti, where he met a worker who sewed 101 Dalmatians clothing in a Disney sub-contracted company. She and her four children – two of whom had malaria and dysentery – lived in a one-room, leaky, windowless shack and shared a bathroom with 10 families. Medical care, education and three meals a day were out of the question.

"One simple meal would cost more than you would make in an entire day," Kernaghan had said, noting that a Haitian worker would have to work about 14-and-a-half years to make what Disney president Michael Eisner makes in one hour. Disney spokesperson Ken Green had said sub-contracted wages were beyond Disney's control. "We don't employ anyone in Haiti," he had said. "We don't deal with the workers."

Workers at a Nike "sweatshop" in Vietnam.

The injustice abounds. An El Salvador woman who made a $34 Gap shirt received 27 cents for her work at the Mandarin International plant in 1995. Even in Toronto, non-unionized homeworkers contracted out by Northern Reflections (owned by Woolworth) made from $2.50 to $4.50 an hour, the Toronto-based ecumenical group Ten Days for Global Justice reported last year.

Change comes, but slowly

Although the use of sweatshop labor in the production of clothing is still common, speaking tours such as those made by Sukaesih and Kernaghan, and other efforts by church and social justice groups, have made a difference.

For instance, Nike announced early this year that it had given many of its Indonesian workers a six percent pay raise and had opened up a Vietnamese factory to external health and safety monitors.

And, Labour Behind the Label Coalition, along with many other labor, church, social justice, business and other groups, is currently negotiating the terms of a Canadian Task Force on Sweatshops, announced by the federal government May 11. The task force will attempt to ensure that consumer products sold in Canada are made under humane working conditions.

"Companies are extremely sensitive about this issue," says Bob Jeffcott. He explains that the task force came about largely because of a postcard campaign organized by Ten Days for Global Justice. "They *will* listen," Jeffcott concludes.

Cathy Majtenyi is editor of Catalyst, *a publication of Citizens for Public Justice. CPJ is a national, ecumenical group which promotes social justice in public affairs. Its headquarters are in Toronto.*

Choosing your clothing from a justice point of view

Bob Jeffcott of the Labour Behind the Label Coalition suggests things concerned shoppers can do to make buying decisions based on respect for workers' rights. These include:

* Checking the label to see whether the clothing was made in countries where violations of labor rights occur. Trouble spots include Indonesia, Burma, China and Hong Kong. (Labels that say "Made in Canada" or "Made in the U.S.A.," however, are no guarantee against the use of sweatshop labor, as some companies such as Woolworth have paid home workers below minimum wage, with no benefits);

* Asking store owners where, and under what conditions, the clothing sold in their stores was made, especially from those countries listed above;

* Asking companies whether there are "codes of conduct" for labor practices, and how those codes are monitored and enforced; and

* Contacting groups that research the labor practices of popular companies, as there is no central "registry" that tracks the labor practices of clothing companies. These groups include the Maquila Solidarity Network/Labour Behind the Label Coalition (416-532-8584); Ten Days for Global Justice (416-463-5312); the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE); and the National Labor Committee (212-242-3002).

Dress Talks

Whatever happened to our 'Sunday best'?

Margaret Griffioen-Drenth

I once asked an Alcoholics Anonymous member how one can tell when someone is beginning to win the battle against the hold of alcohol over his or her life. He answered, "By their appearance." A person might come to a first meeting a total wreck, internally and externally. However, if the program "clicked" in that person's inner life, his or her physical transformation was also "astounding," according to my friend in AA. The recovering alcoholic always seemed to discover a sense of self-worth and self-respect, and wanted that to be visible to all.

Should the transformation from sinner to "saved sinner" be reflected in the Christian's wardrobe? Weekday discernment of what is appropriate may be reasonably obvious to many. However, when it comes to Sunday attire, Christians don't always agree. Should we have distinct Sunday clothes?

Dress as if for royalty?

Remember being cajoled into dressing up to go to church with the old line about "What you would wear if the Queen were coming for tea?" (As if that would ever happen, or that you'd even want it to, but the assumption was that if you'd dress up for her, you better do it for God!) This is a really unfair comparison, I think. The Queen, with all due respect, is

human. God, however, is, well, God! The creator of the universe, the Alpha, the Omega, the Great I Am, the one who sacrificed his Son so we can have eternal life. So who of us has clothes that even begin to be appropriate to wear before him?

Christians often look to the early church for inspiration as they struggle with issues such as this. Acts 2:43-47 says: "The apostles were doing many miracles and signs, and everyone felt great respect for God.... The believers met together in the temple every day. They ate together in their homes, happy to share their food with joyful hearts. They praised God and were liked by all the people. Every day the Lord added those who were being saved to the group of believers" (Inspirational Study Bible).

Did you notice this key phrase?: "...And everyone felt great respect for God." That's a clue to what's appropriate to wear. Out of respect for God did the early believers take time to rush home and change into their Sabbath best each day before their daily meeting in the temple?

I don't know, but I suspect they did what was needed to prepare their hearts for worship, and if that required a change in apparel, they did so.

Eschew the daily routine

Our worship preparations, including what to wear, need to be done with a mindset that where we're going and what we're doing is different from our daily routines. If all week I take an hour to dress every morning in co-ordinated, sophisticated office attire, on Sunday I may opt to dress down and use the extra time with my family on devotions and other spiritual preparations.

If my weekly activities call for casual attire, my Sunday clothes might be more dressy so that I can in a visual, symbolic way prepare myself to go to God's house, versus the barn, factory, laundry room, or shopping.

Clothing selection, even for church, should also keep in mind what we'll be doing physically. Wear what's comfortable in order that you may fully participate in whatever type of service you attend, whether to raise arms in praise, kneel in prayer, play an instrument, teach Sunday school or simply sit in a pew.

Let children dress comfortably so that their memories of church are not primarily of tight, itchy, hot, uncomfortable clothes. Let teens dress to reflect their created personalities and age, meanwhile reflecting their respect for God. While you may not always like teenagers' fashion style, most will compromise and set aside slogan-filled T-shirts and immodest apparel if they can wear something they like.

Most importantly, don't be so concerned about what others are wearing that you don't take time to be a friend and ambassador of the Lord to visitors and fellow church members alike. Like recovering alcoholics, as we change on the inside our outward appearance will reflect that change.

"God does not see the same way people see. People look at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7b).

Margaret Griffioen-Drenth lives in Burlington, Ontario. While usually she wears her Sunday best, she has raised eyebrows by wearing shorts to church on occasion. With her husband's assistance, she even manages to have her two sons arrive at church in clean clothes.

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman

Balaam's ass crosses the bridge

I had a seminary professor once who made it a point to remind us that God speaks to us through people and events we would not often expect. "God used even Balaam's ass," was his refrain (see Num. 22-23, KJV or RSV).

Campus Ministries is a bridge between church and the academy. Often we see it as a one-way bridge, where the church is constantly proclaiming to the university community the Good News with which it has been entrusted. Campus ministers are one example of the church's commitment to that end.

Two-way traffic?

But what if traffic were opened up to going both ways? What if professors were given assignments in the same way campus ministers are? Picture it this way: a professor is given an office in every denominational headquarters across North America in order to pass on the discoveries of the university to the churches. She would plan different seminars, lectures and study groups to facilitate passing on certain key concerns.

One concern would certainly be the treatment of women in the church. The professor would urge the church to ensure that women are treated fairly – given equal opportunity to serve, and paid according to the value of the work they perform. She would also be concerned about the how the church speaks, calling it to use language which makes everyone feel included.

The professor would call attention to other ways in which people are typically treated unfairly: racial prejudice, physical barriers for the disabled, and discrimination against homosexuals. She would have special concern for those who are marginalized, in whatever way. Maybe even for those who might have opinions which differ from the church's status quo, whether liberal, conservative, or in totally different territory altogether.

Finally, she would want to make sure that environmental concerns are a priority. In church operations as a whole, and also in the preaching.

Stuck on metaphysics

You'll notice that all of the above are (rather ironically) ethical concerns being directed towards the church. This is the broader message that is coming across the bridge from the university: we in the West have been too long preoccupied with metaphysics (objective reality), and it has been at the expense of ethics (justice concerns). In other words, big rigid systems of thought have taken priority over how we practically live with one another and God's good earth.

You'll notice this same movement among Christian students today: they are more interested in service projects, fairness and saving the environment than they are in getting all the doctrine right. Traffic does go both ways across the bridge – the church and the academy have been in dialogue for centuries. Sometimes it's hard to tell just who raised the issues first. But one thing is for sure: both are more God glorifying because of it.

We are often (and at times rightly) suspicious of the university. There are many things being promoted there that are sinful and idolatrous. But the same thing happens in the church – and in our own hearts.

"God used even Balaam's ass," said my professor. And at times he would add: "So maybe he uses even me."

Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed chaplain at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario.

Comment

What about weekly Communion?

Dear Mary,

Remember talking about congregational leadership a few months ago? I'd like to pick that up once more, mostly because of a recent development in our own congregation. (Caveat: this is my perspective on it; some members may have a different one.)

The question which arose out of that development (my question, to be sure) is this: how much should democracy play a role in church development? By "democracy" I mean majority rule. Let me sketch the circumstances.

The leadership in our congregation has decided to begin celebrating Communion in every Sunday morning service for a substantial trial period. After the trial period our experiences will be reviewed before a decision is made to either go on or return to the current situation, Communion one Sunday each month.

Our membership is divided. I read some as strongly opposed. Indeed, some of those want to go back to Communion just four times a year. Some are strongly in favor. Many are willing to try it, even though they may feel hesitant at the moment. I'm one of the latter. I'm simply not sure how I will react to having Communion each week, but how can I tell until I try long enough to be able to reflect on my experiences?

The decision did not come out of the blue. The initial push came from our minister. He began by floating the idea among members of the worship ministry in our church and among the board of elders. He shared the ideas informally with members of the congregation. He put his thoughts in writing and distributed the document to all families, inviting discussion and reaction. The document addressed historical, doctrinal and biblical reasons for weekly Communion.

In three educational sessions he gave opportunity for every member to reflect on the meaning of communion and denominational and personal histories of this sacrament – about 20 members attended. Over several months our congregational newsletter contained references to the topic, for instance, in board of elders reports.

Among the reactions, one strain bears on the topic of congregational leadership, on the function and power of the congregation as expressed in a vote during a congregational meeting. The proper way to decide, so I heard it argued, is to vote. Let the pew's yeas and nays decide.

That may sound reasonable, and under certain conditions I can support such a thought. But something bothered me about that suggestion in these circumstances. In neither the congregational meeting nor in personal conversations have members given voice to reasons for taking, or opposing, this trial route. As a congregation we've not gone back to Scriptures to re-read the passages that bear on the topic. Or to Calvin's advocacy of weekly Communion (he couldn't get the elders in Geneva to agree!). Or to a reconsideration of what a sacrament is, and how sacraments relate to preaching, and to the life of the congregation.

When reasons were presented at the congregational meeting they were met only by those opposed with, "I don't like it." The discussion never got beyond "gut" against "gut." And in my own informal discussions with our members I have not sensed a willingness to calmly consider the many and complex sides of this issue.

I've sensed only "right" or "wrong," for or against, and criticism of the leadership who are willing to organize a congregational vote (but with that vote occurring only after the trial period).

And then I say: no democracy for me. Democracy is dangerous when it's only will against will, emotion against emotion. When it allows people to exercise power without responsibility. When it invests power in a body count. I'm glad that the church leadership did what it did. I'm glad not because I'm so hot on weekly Communion (yet?). I'm glad because it has forced me to reflect on an important matter in church worship, a keystone of the exercise of faith. My church leaders have a right, and a duty, to make me think about faith matters.

What do you think?

Love,
Adrian

Dear Adrian,

What an interesting situation and question! Your church is tackling a couple of sacred cows at the same time. Not content to take on the frequency of Lord's Supper celebrations, you're questioning democracy besides.

Well, that's the way it goes. Questions never seem to come up in a simple, single way. One thing leads to another, at least if you don't simply shut the door and refuse to look outside.

But I think your question is an important one. In the political realm, democracy works best if there are informed, if not educated, citizens who are capable of some discernment and who are able to look beyond their own private interests to the welfare of the whole. Which to my mind these days makes our whole practice of majority rule problematic.

Leaders are elected largely on the basis of how photo- and telegenic they are, and the most "successful" ones appeal to our greed and our self-interest. "Cut taxes and get the bums off welfare" grabs votes. Even if voters want to inform themselves, they can't rely on the candidates for information on where they stand on issues.

But your question is about leadership and democracy in the church, specifically in your own congregation. I think leadership has the responsibility to lead. Obvious, I know, but leading means being able to look beyond the present situation to something that is potentially better for the congregation.

The council is responsible for the direction of the congregation and ultimately has the final say, at least if my admittedly scanty knowledge of Reformed Church Order is correct. It sounds to me like your pastor and council have done a good job of laying the groundwork for a change. They haven't imposed a change, but neither have they backed down from something they believe would be in the best interests of the congregation.

A congregation in that situation needs to be willing to be led. I agree with you that to call a vote prematurely can really block all discussion, let alone reform – which is clear when one looks at our church history. Church members need to be open to looking at more than one side of an issue, open to some controlled experimentation, like a trial period.

Granted all that, my question is whether a matter as sensitive and subjective as frequency of the Lord's Supper should ever be decided by congregational ballot.

I'll be interested to hear about what path your church chooses, and also what your personal reaction to weekly Communion will be. My question about the trial period has to do with the nature of Communion.

Can you really enjoy Communion while in the back of your mind is the question of whether this weekly thing is "working" for you or not? I'd be afraid that the experiment and the reasons for or against might become more important than the Communion itself. My own preference is for weekly Communion, but the idea of "trying it" seems incongruous. On the other hand, how would you ever know?

So keep me posted!

Mary

Adrian Peetoom is a retired educational editor who lives in Waterloo, Ont.
Mary Vander Vennen is a retired therapist who lives in Toronto.

Media

Not all ©opyright might makes right

Bill Van Dyk

Most of the church music leaders and musicians that I know personally are rather scrupulous, nowadays, about observing copyright laws. They ensure that they have paid for the right to copy the music they use for their choirs or for congregational singing or musicals.

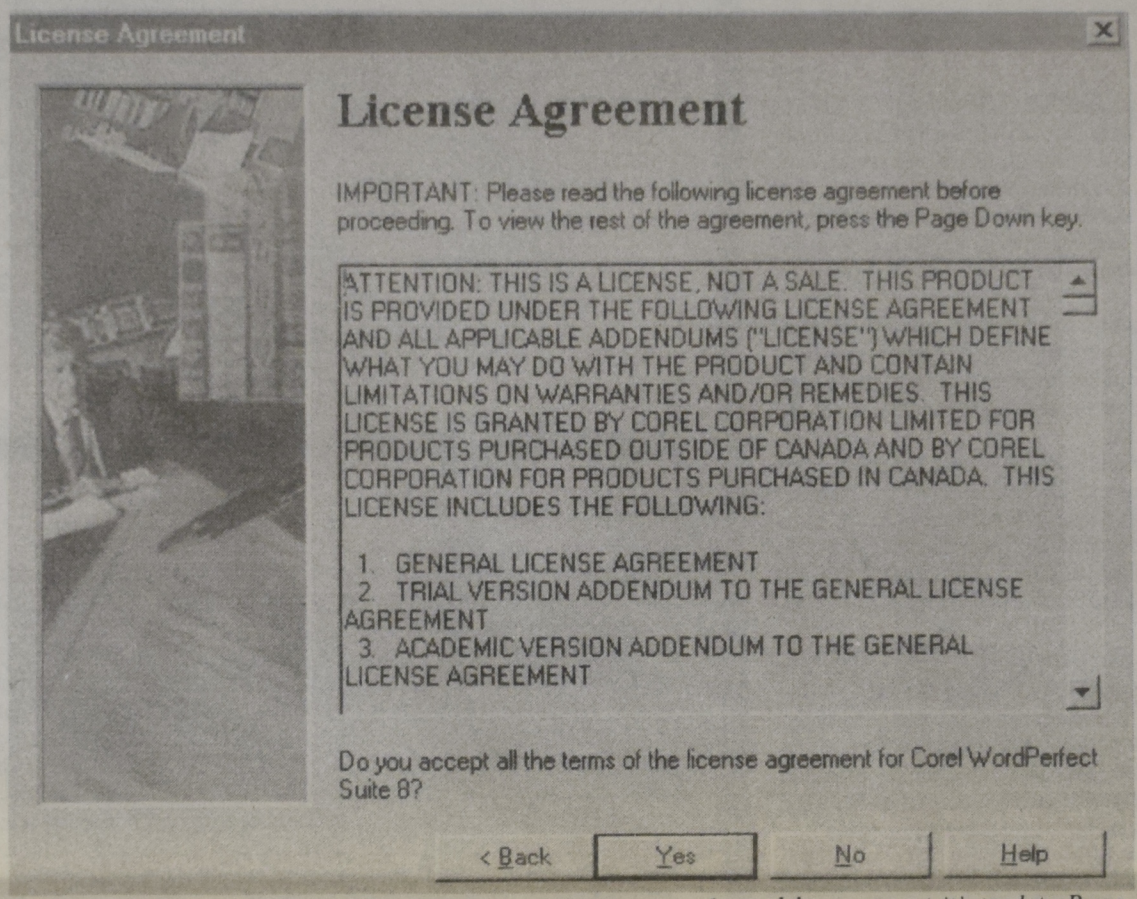
I recently had a conversation with a gentleman involved in his church's "music ministry." He told me that when he was recording church services onto cassette tapes for the use of the elderly and shut-ins he stopped the tape every time the congregation sang a hymn. I asked him why. He told me his church couldn't afford to pay the copyright holders for permission to copy the performance of the hymns. I asked him why he thought they had to pay an additional royalty for this privilege. He told me that he had asked the copyright holders and they had told him he had to.

The church had already paid for the right to sing the song in church through their purchase of hymnals. They may even have paid twice, if they accepted some copyright holders' arguments that putting the music on an overhead projector incurred additional royalties. Now they were being asked to pay a third time, to replay the singing of that song to a person who was not at the service, but who, nonetheless, was a member of the congregation, and had paid his or her share of the cost of the hymnals.

What would we think if the government imposed a surcharge on the sale of marijuana? Clearly the government cannot both collect the surcharge and arrest the purchaser.

Personally, I find this a little absurd. But how do we know, in fact, what the limitations of copyright law are? Well, if you asked most church choir directors or computer software purchasers or CD purchasers or book-buyers, they would tell you that they got their information from the copyright holders themselves.

When you install Windows 98 on your computer, for example, a big screen full of legalese pops up and you are supposed to read it and click "yes," to indicate that you agree to all these terms before you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Yes
No
Help

"When you take a software package to your house and unwrap it and read the agreement, it's too late. By accepting your money for the software, the vendor has already made an agreement with you, the terms and conditions of which can no longer be changed."

are allowed to install the software. That's true of virtually all commercial software. This is the so-called "shrink-wrap" agreement. Have you ever actually read it? Is it legally binding?

Just because Microsoft or any other company says it's so does not mean that it is. And just because a music publisher insists that you must pay extra to make overhead copies of songs you already paid for through your purchase of hymnals, that doesn't mean he is right.

Very few of these claimed rights have been tested in the courts. And it may surprise you to know that when they have been tested, many of these claimed rights were rejected. In one little-known case, a computer bulletin board operator in the U.S. was arrested for distributing copies of Microsoft Office and Lotus 1-2-3. In spite of the impressive resources of the software makers' legal teams, the case was dismissed, at least partly because, in the words of the judge, "everybody does it." More significantly, the verdict was *not* appealed!

Entitled to a refund?

That shrink-wrap agreement usually states that if you do *not* agree to the terms given, you may click on "no" and obtain a refund. But if you bought your computer from Dell, Hewlett-Packard, or Compaq or most other major suppliers, you would be surprised to find that the offer of a refund is an outright falsehood. When you buy a computer from them, these vendors make you pay for a copy of Windows (the computer's operating system) whether you *want* a copy of Windows (or even if you already have a licensed copy) or not. If you want OS/2 or Linux — too bad. You'll have to buy a copy yourself and then remove the Windows 98 you have already paid for. Most people don't want to bother. (Some of these companies are revising their policies in light of the Department of Justice investigation which is now under way in the U.S.)

In the second place, the "Uniform Commercial Code" (UCC), a set of statutes co-operatively developed by state governments and passed by state legislatures, requires vendors to guarantee that any product you buy will perform *reasonably as expected* when you take it home, even if sold "as is." Leaving aside the question of whether any of the bug-ridden versions of Windows have ever performed "reasonably" well, this tacit agreement is made *at the point of purchase*, not at your home.

When you take a software package to your house and unwrap it and read the agreement, it's too late. By accepting your money for the software, the vendor has already made an agreement with you, the terms and conditions of which can no longer be changed, no matter what you think you are agreeing to when you click on the "yes" button.

Surcharge and conviction?

It has not been tested in court, but you very likely have every right in the world to click on "yes" and proceed to install your software even if you have no intention of abiding by the license agreement.

I should make it clear that I am not advocating that we, as Christians, disregard copyright laws. What I propose is that we begin to critically examine the meaning of current copyright legislation and begin to challenge copyright owners on some of their excessive claims.

In some cases, copyright owners appear to want to have it both ways. Making a tape or CD copy of another CD at home, they say, is illegal. But they have persuaded the Canadian and U.S. governments to add a surcharge to blank cassettes and audio CDs in order to compensate them for losses incurred due to presumed "piracy" of their copyrighted material. I have a number of problems with this approach.

Assumes criminality

1.) What would we think if the government imposed a surcharge on the sale of marijuana? Clearly the government cannot both collect the surcharge and arrest the purchaser. We would rightly conclude the government has *de facto* legalized the use of marijuana. In the same way, this surcharge on blank tapes and CDs implies that it is now legal to make your own copies of copyrighted music. After all, you are paying for it.

2.) The surcharge assumes that everyone who purchases a blank tape or CD is going to make an illegal recording. This is problematic for obvious reasons, especially in a nation (the U.S.) that allows teenagers to own deadly weapons on the reasoning that you can't *assume* they will do anything illegal with them. It imposes an unfair penalty on those who make legitimate use of blank tapes, especially musicians, churches and educational groups.

3.) The surcharge assumes that the music and software industries have been *harmed* by illegal copying. This assumption is highly questionable. About 10 years ago, Microsoft, Corel (who makes WordPerfect) and Lotus all removed copy protection from their software. They did this because they realized that more people would buy their product if they did. In other words, these companies knew perfectly well that they would *benefit* by making it possible to make "illegal" copies of their product. In fact, this "illegal" distribution was probably critical to the success of their products, as home users often selected the software their employers would purchase.

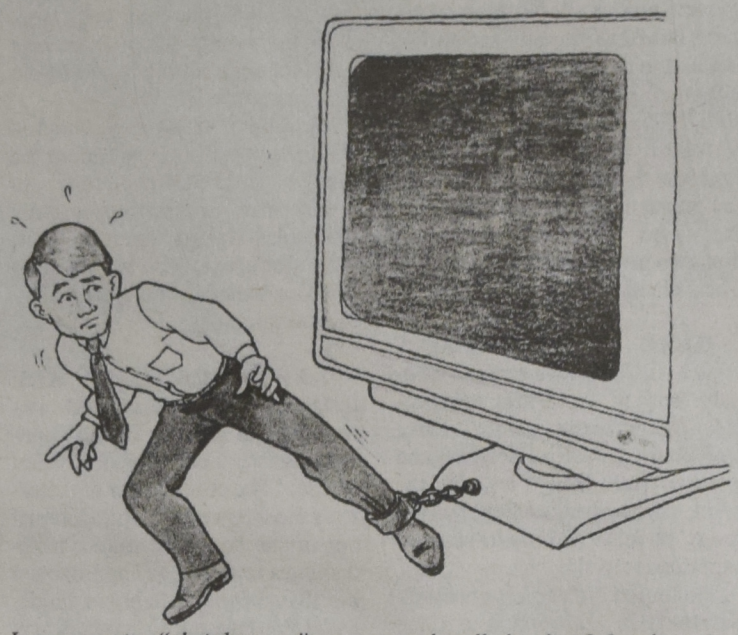
Netscape recently went from a garage full of hackers to a multibillion dollar company through the *free* distribution of their product. It would be very difficult for them to demonstrate that piracy cost them any money.

The right to use

Copyright owners have consistently argued that when you purchase one of their products you are not buying the physical medium — the CD or tape or record — but a right to use the intellectual

property recorded on the medium. If that is true, then you should not have to pay twice or three times for a product that you have already purchased just because it has been transferred to another medium.

You paid for the music on Bruce Cockburn's new CD. You should be able to freely copy it onto a tape so you can listen to it in the car, or on your Walkman while you are jogging. You bought a copy of WordPerfect for your office? Why can't you use it on your computer at home? Once again, I know of no court ruling in favor of the copyright holders on the issue of copying for personal use.



Is a computer "shrink-wrap" agreement legally binding? Just because Microsoft or any other company says it's so does not mean that it is.

Biblical fairness

What does the Bible say about copyright? Obviously, there are no direct references to anything resembling the idea of "intellectual property" in Scripture. If one presumes that intellectual property is like any other property, then the Bible obviously requires that we respect the rights of all persons to own property, but that we must also use our property responsibly, for the public good, and that we must exercise stewardship over the resources God has given us.

The Bible also calls upon employers to pay employees a just wage, to ensure that workers receive the "fruit of their labors." In that sense, a software programmer or songwriter is entitled to be paid for his or her work.

What we can take from the Bible is also a strong sense of justice and fairness. And what we are witnessing now is unjust and unfair. In the U.S., the large corporate interests are able to influence the government to an enormous degree because of lax regulations on election campaign contributions. Thus Disney was able to persuade Congress to pass a law allowing them to extend their copyright of the Mickey Mouse character. Well, what's wrong with that? Disney invented Mickey Mouse, right?

Temporary restriction

The reader should understand that the principle of copyright is quite the opposite of what most people think it is. When, in 1710, the British House of Lords ruled on one of the earliest variants of copyright legislation brought forward by Queen Anne (at the request of John Locke and others), they stated, as a matter of principle, that there is no such thing as intellectual "property." Ideas, images and information are part of the body of human knowledge and belong to everyone. No one has a natural right to prevent others from using any part of the storehouse of human wisdom and imagination.

The Lords did, however, grant that a *temporary* period of exclusivity was in the interest of all, because it would encourage artists, writers and musicians to make their new work available to the general public. That is the purpose of copyright and, in almost 300 years, no Western government has yet rescinded that principle.

The Disney Corporation has had a generous period of time in which to cash in on Mr. Mouse. If it wishes to continue to make money from animated characters, it should invest the time and effort to create new ones, instead of coasting on achievements made long ago by people who are either dead or otherwise no longer employed by Disney. The extension of the copyright period is contrary to the public interest, and to the principle of copyright, because it actually rewards the Disney Corporation for its sloth.

A money grab

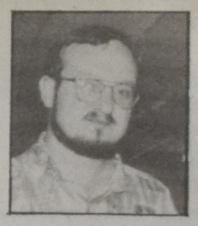
While the media rants almost continuously about sex scandals and so-called "character issues," the Republican-controlled U.S. Congress is considering passage of another extremely significant bill that will radically alter the practice and exercise of copyright. At present, "facts" cannot be copyrighted. However, this proposed legislation will allow companies and individuals to copyright *collections* of facts, including, ironically, collections of court decisions.

Does this serve to protect the right of a worker to a fair wage? Or is it simply a sophisticated and devious money grab? Either way, it is utterly shameful that CNN and other major news outlets have virtually ignored the implications of this legislation.

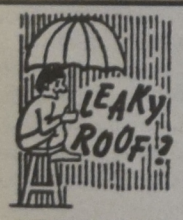
More significantly, in Britain, a corporation called Human Genome Sciences has recently been granted a patent for the whole genetic sequence of the bacteria that causes meningitis. This means that any researchers trying to develop cures or therapies for this deadly disease may be required to pay a fee to HGS for the use of this information.

Furthermore, HGS will be able to extract a royalty from every prescription of any remedies or vaccines that are created. HGS acts as if it discovered this genetic sequence in a complete vacuum. It pretends that it alone devised the technologies, the theoretical infrastructures and research that resulted in their discovery.

As Christians, we need to be deeply concerned about the implications of copyright, and the cavalier way in which many copyright owners seek to apply the law today. These issues will affect your pocketbook, and can affect the health and well-being of millions of the poorest peoples on the planet.



Bill Van Dyk is a computer consultant in London, Ontario.



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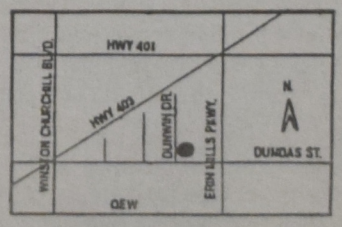

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News Comment

Nose for News

Bert Hielema

ONE OF MY AIMS HERE is to tickle, goad, prompt, entice, exhort, cajole, bait, seduce the CC readership to sit up and take notice of what's going on in our small world and not be taken in by modern media. Tobacco executives are dangerous only to smokers, but we all "smoke" television, including its news. We all inhale TV. We all subscribe to only what these people say is worth reporting. We mustn't forget that TV is entertainment, and TV news has become entertainment also.

TV moguls are much more dangerous than are the purveyors of tobacco because television has the power to make us into TV idiots, and worse, religious bigots. The giant corporations and their $40 billion worth of advertising dictate what is aired. For them, TV programs are weapons of mass distraction and mind destruction. They dictate not belief in Christ's redemption, but that buying things – any things – is redemption, and guarantees happiness.

These "weapons" create a lack of concern (to put it mildly) with the world outside the shopping mall. Only severe shocks in the global and domestic economies will shake the beliefs and values that govern the minds and consciousness of most North Americans. Therefore, my prime concern is to alert readers to be critical, of me in the first place, and of all who claim to bring the truth.

TWO TEENAGED BOYS from Guinea, West Africa, hid themselves in the nosewheel section of an airbus and died on the way to Belgium. On their bodies was found a formal letter, begging the "Excellencies, gentlemen-members and responsible citizens of Europe" to help educate the youngsters of Africa." It clearly hints that Yaguine and Fode did not expect to survive their flight.

"If you see that we have sacrificed ourselves and lost our lives, it is because we suffer too much in Africa and need your help to struggle against poverty and war. We want to study and ask you to help us become like you in Africa.... Please excuse us very much for daring to write this letter."

Had the boys arrived alive in Brussels they would almost certainly have been hustled straight into a detention centre and their letter would have been read only by an immigration official before being tossed into a wastepaper basket.

Colonialism there may have ended, but what has come in its place? Corrupt government, or no government at all. Nothing so ensures hardship, poverty and suffering as the absence of responsible, effective and honest statesmanship. The world is spending $9 billion on pet food and cannot find less than one-tenth of that for the most dispossessed people in the world. With these two boys died two promising human beings. Their blood cries to heaven.

HERE IS SOMETHING which will help you remain mentally "with it" for as long as possible. A scientist (from Duke University in North Carolina) and a writer (from New York) say the brain, our mysterious grey matter, needs novelty and multi-sensory experiences to stay sharp.

No longer are aerobics enough: we also need *neurobics*, a regimen of brain exercises to ensure long-lasting intellectual fitness.

In a new book called *Keep your Brain Alive*, Dr. Katz (the scientist) and Manning Rubin (the writer) throw in 83 exercises to coax your consciousness off the couch and into the open air where fresh winds can blow the mental cobwebs away and let new ideas enter.

This can only be done when we train our brains to experience the unexpected and enlist all our senses so that we live lives that are brain-healthy.

How? We must jolt ourselves out of our routines and attempt the new. We adults tend to look at something and figure we know everything we need to know. Well, we don't. We only know very little. I have discovered what many others have before me: life is learning, and learning can take place only when we admit our ignorance. And ignorance and religious staleness can be cured only by being openmindedly different.

How to go about this? Dare. Dare such crazy and shocking things such as turning your clock upside down, brushing your teeth with the wrong hand, switching places at table, sitting in a different pew in church.

Why do this? Say these authors: "Getting out of a rut wakes up the brain's 'attentional circuits' to start the flow of growth-promoting molecules called neurotrophins, which connect new circuits that improve memory and creative and logical thinking."

AND THEN THERE ARE instances of closeminded extremes. The reporter of the (London) *Sunday Times* began a recent article: "The commander of America's most powerful militia jumped out of the door half-naked, brandishing a revolver, as I approached his (Muskegon) Michigan home. Lynn Van Huizen, 53, said: 'Sorry, you can't be too careful these days.'"

Van Huizen, a decorated Vietnam veteran, is the leader of the Michigan Militia Corps Wolverines, now 15,000 strong. He is afraid that the year 2000 and the Y2K problem might lead to civil war in America. Actually, that trouble could start in a few days: September 9 (9/9/99; 9999 is a signal to computers to sign off), and later in the year electricity grids and communications systems may not be working and supermarkets may be unable to stock their shelves. According to people like Van Huizen, others will panic, and there will be riots.

More frightening even than the militias are two groups who, most unfortunately, associate themselves with Christianity: "Christian Identity" and the "Phineas Priesthood." Christian Identity (of which Buford Furrow, the man who went after the Jewish children in Los Angeles, was a member) has some 50,000 followers from many churches, and believes that Anglo-Saxons are the "chosen people" described in the Bible, and nonwhites are "mud people" on the level of animals, because they were created before Adam.

Jews, say Furrow and friends, are a product of a union between Eve and Satan and are rightly called the "Children of Satan." A final apocalyptic battle is predicted in which the chosen people will triumph over their enemies. Scary stuff.

The Phineas Priesthood is even crazier, it that's possible. They base their claims on Numbers 25, a short Old Testament chapter in which Phineas, a grandson of Aaron, is praised by God for killing both an Israelite man and the Midianite woman he was sleeping with.

This movement opposes interracial marriage and wants to root out "Sodomites" from the land. Members of Phineas Priest become "priests" through act of initiations ("Phineas Acts") – killing non-whites or people in mixed marriages. The "priests" have no formal organization and are encouraged to act alone so that the FBI cannot infiltrate their ranks.

NORTH AMERICA IS undergoing a crisis of values which it seems nobody has the faintest idea how to remedy. Yet the rate of religious observance in the United States is much greater than in any nation of Western Europe, while the rate of gun violence also exceeds theirs as well. The most God-fearing region, the South, is also the most gun-toting, and historically the most violent. Can somebody make sense of all this?

NEWS SOURCES I subscribe to have reported one jarring theory for the drop in crime in the U.S. Their thesis: the sharp rise in the number of abortions in the 1970s eliminated many of the would-be criminals of the 1990s. I imagine that the last word on this theory has not been spoken.

Let me try to list some other reasons: a vibrant economy where most people have jobs; a greater percentage of the population now better educated; perhaps better policing and a more efficient justice system; and parents who are making a renewed effort at instilling respect for the social order in their children.

Bert Hielema is not a retired insurance adjustor but was formerly a commercial real estate appraiser (AACI). He lives in Tweed, Ontario, where he tries to practise his love for creation.

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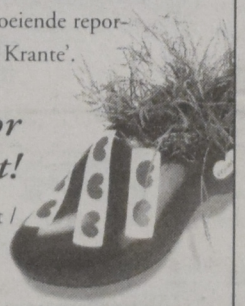

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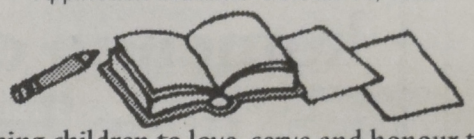

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PAUL & MAARTJE GROEN
(nee VISSER)

You have shown us how to live before God and man. May the Lord bless you as you have been a blessing for us.
Elly Groen – Hamilton, Ont.
John & Leanne Groen – Richmond Hill, Ont.
Joel, Aaron, Daniel, Benjamin
Jane & Jim Vanderzwaag – Dundas, Ont.
Greg, Dennis, Sarah
Mike & Marina Groen – Carlisle, Ont.
Tania, David, Matthew
Maryann & John Voortman – Chino, Calif.
Paul, Melissa, Nikki, Brian
Paul & Teresa Groen – Carlisle, Ont.
Reuben, Michelle, Paul, Lyndsay, Derek
Bill & Lynn Groen – Caledonia, Ont.
Jennifer, Kara, Tyler

You are invited to come and help this young couple celebrate with your best wishes at their home on the date, September 22, 1999, between 10-12 a.m. and 2-4 p.m. at 124 Carlisle Rd., Ont.
Address: RR 1, Freelton, ON L0R 1K0

JOE & HIELKJE VEENSTRA

Congratulations, Mom & Dad, on your 40th wedding anniversary. We treasure you as parents and cherish your commitment to each other.
Love and best wishes from your family:
Karen & Jack
Shelley & Garry
Elaine & Pat
Chris & Shannon
Annamarie & Charlie
and 10 grandchildren.
Mom & Dad invite their relatives and friends to celebrate this happy occasion with an open house on Saturday, Sept. 17, 1999, 2 - 4 p.m. at their home, 3341 Bruce St., Cornwall, Ont. Best wishes only, please!

Athens, Ont. — Athens, Ont.
1959 September 9 1999

With thankfulness to our faithful God of grace and for his sustaining love for our parents and grandparents,

HENK & GAIL BOUWERS
(nee BEERDA)

we are pleased to announce their 40th wedding anniversary on September 9, 1999.
Shirley – Athens, Ont.
Melissa, Katie
Jane & Clarence – Athens, Ont.
Sara, Joel, Erin, Jenna, Kristi
John & Geraldine – Grand Rapids, Mich.
Joshua, Rachel, Matthew, Lucas
Judy & John – Toronto, Ont.
Alex, Emily
David & Lisa – Brockville, Ont.
Mom and Dad, we love you. Through nightmares and cuts, through weddings and baptisms, and especially through the deepest sorrow; you were there. Thanks.
"I will sing of God's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations." (Ps. 89:1)
Correspondence can be sent to:
RR 3, Athens, ON K0E 1B0

1959 September 4 1999

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever."
(Ps. 136:1)

We thank God for blessing our parents,

ADRIAN & ATTIE DIELEMAN

with 40 years of marriage.
We are grateful for the Lord's faithfulness and grace in their lives and pray that He will continue to bless and keep them in His loving care.
With love from your family:
Bill & Grace Dieleman
Derek, Andrea, Kelly, Robyn, Erin
Brenda & Ken Van Ommen
Alexander, Alanna
Ken & Ingrid Dieleman
Benjamin, Ethan, Abigail, Matthea
Ron & Nancy Dieleman
Brandon, Brittany, Taylor, Kelsey
Home address: RR 6, Thamesville, ON N0P 2K0

Gramsbergen, the Neth. — Thunder Bay, Ont.
1929 August 29 1999

We announce the celebration of the 70th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

HERMAN & JENNIGJE PRENGER
(nee FINKE)

"The Lord will keep you from all harm – He will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."
(Ps. 121:7)

We are thankful to our heavenly Father for the many years they shared together and with us, and pray that He will continue to keep them in his hand.
Their grateful children:
Henry & Tine Prenger – Thunder Bay
Herman & Alice Prenger – Thunder Bay
Rika & Ron Perrier – Thunder Bay
Martin & Madeline Prenger – Blackpool, Eng.
Marge & Jim Hurdon – Thunder Bay
Jenny & Carl Taylor – Thunder Bay
31 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.
Home address: 78 Walkover St., Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1L2
Phone 807-767-2239.

Almelo, the Neth. — Amherstburg, Ont.
1949 Sept. 8 1999

With thankfulness to God we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of Mom and Dad, Oma and Opa,

GEORGE & JANE VANDENBRINK
(nee MICHEL)

We rejoice with them and pray that God will continue to bless them with joy, love, peace and good health.
With love from your family,
George & Ruth — Amherstburg
Matthew, Heather, Michael
Harry & Patricia — Amherstburg
Eric, Emily, Jessica, Abbey
Robert & Karen – Tavistock
Irene & Wilson – Midland
Alicia

Please join us in celebrating at an open house on Saturday, Sept. 11, 1999, from 2-4 p.m. at the Essex Christian Reformed Church, 276 Talbot St. S., Essex, Ont.
Best wishes only.
Home address: 29 Victoria St. N., Amherstburg, ON N9V 2X7

Personal

Widow would like to correspond with (meet) a **Christian gentlemen age 65-75**. I enjoy travel, good music, reading, church activities. I will answer every response. **Reply to File 2653, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Christian Reformed widower, 67, professional, living in Alberta, semi- retired, active in volunteer work, interested in cultural events, reading, walking, bicycling, occasional travel, swimming and X/C skiing; would like to meet active and congenial Christian lady with social conscience and wide interests, and a sense of humour. **Reply to File 2695, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Anniversaries

1949 September 29 1999

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." (Psalm 119:105)
The Lord has been their constant companion and guide for 50 years. We praise God for his faithfulness and the blessings he has given our family. We pray that God may continue to be our parents' and grandparents' strength and shield.

GERARD & HENDRIKA VEDDER

With all our love:
Janet & John deWinter
Elizabeth
Grace & Peter Geertsema
Joshua, Brian, Philip
Hetty & Aalt Van Bokhorst
Krista, Faith
Jackie & Peter Ritskes
Rachel, Sarah-Lynn, Timothy, Jacob
Elisabeth & Brian Vanden Berg
Michael, Katrina, Erika, Jeremy
Open house to be held on Saturday, October 2, 1999, from 2-4 p.m. in the First Christian Reformed Church, Kemptville, Ont.
Home address: Box 1732, Kemptville, ON L0G 1C0

Stadskanaal, the Neth. — Winona, Ont.
1949 September 13 1999

With thankfulness and praise to God for his continued faithfulness in blessing our parents and grandparents,

WIEBRAND & HARMINA STUIVE

we are pleased to announce their 50th anniversary.
"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26)
Thank you, Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma, for all your love, prayers and Christian nurturing you have provided. May the Lord continue to make his face to shine upon you and bless you.
Henk – Grimsby
Hilda – Grimsby
Dick & Mieke (friend) – St. Catharines
Henry & Jackie – Beamsville
Rannon, Leanne, Heather, Monique
Barry & Barb – Grimsby
Dean & Tammy, Devin
Doug & Yvonne – Grimsby
Jordan, Sara, Bethany
David & Beverley – Maple Ridge
Zachariah, Rebekah, Naomi
Alex – Winona
Everyone is invited to an open house in their honor from 2-4 p.m., Sept. 11, 1999, at the John Knox Memorial Christian School on Hwy. 8, Stoney Creek, Ont. Best wishes only.
Home address: 1206 Hwy. 8, Stoney Creek, ON L8E 5K2

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

The **First Christian Reformed Church of Guelph, Ont.,** seeks a part-time administrative secretary. Your competencies include excellent oral and written communication skills, good public relations skills and advanced skills in Microsoft Word 97 and Quick Books. Please send resume to:

First Christian Reformed Church
Attention: Personnel Committee
287 Water St.
Guelph, ON N1G 1B6

Miscellaneous

One bedroom apartment, available Oct. 1, 1999, in **Jordan, Ont.** Fridge and stove included. Utilities extra. For more information call **Joanne** at **905-562-5629.**

MOOI FRANEKER

Te huur voor vakantie: ons gemeubileerd huis in Franeker, Friesland, Nederland.
Franeker is één van de Friese elf steden met veel cultuur en het wereldberoemde planetarium van Eise Eisinga.
Restaurant en supermarkt op loopafstand.

Call for information:
519-842-5684

The Seafarers Centre in Montreal, Quebec has an e-mail change. The new address is: seafarer@colba.net

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Candidate Jeff Janssen accepted a call to Mount Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, Ont.

Obituary

Brockville Halifax
Ont. N.S.

JANE ANTONIAK
(nee BREIMER)

On July 29, 1999, after a brief illness, our precious daughter Jane was taken home to be with her Lord, at the age of 47. She will be deeply missed, as she lived a life of humble service to so many.
"Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways." (Ps. 128:1)
Lovingly remembered by her mom and dad,
Henk & Riek Breimer – Brockville, Ont.
her husband and children,
George – Halifax, N.S.
Tanya, Michael, Kristan
her sister and brothers,
Marg & Gus Westra – Ottawa
Theo & Mary Breimer – Ancaster
John & Elly Breimer – Kingston
Ed & Joann Breimer – Niagara Falls
and several nieces and nephews.
A funeral service celebrating her life on earth and her new life with Jesus was held August 1, 1999, at All Nations CRC in Halifax, N.S.
Correspondence address: 324 First Ave., Brockville, ON K6V 3C1

Wedding

"Two are stronger than one ... for if one falls, the other will lift him up."
(Eccl. 4:9, 10)

HEATHER HOUTMAN
daughter of Harry & Tine Houtman of Toronto, Ont.

and

ANTHONY KRASZNAI
son of Frank & Jan Krasznai of Woodbridge, Ont. will renew their wedding vows in a ceremony at First CRC, Toronto, Ont. on September 11, 1999, at 1:30 p.m.
Address: 2221 Waterford Forest Circle, Cary, NC 27513

Christian Courier **wants more subscribers. Give a gift subscription to someone who needs it.**
1-800-969-4838

Make the Grade IN THE **CLASSIFIEDS**

You are invited to...

A Day of Encouragement celebration and training

refreshing **hope**

Saturday October 16

Hamilton Christian High School, Ancaster, Ontario
9:00 am- 4:00 pm

Featuring:

- 54 workshops: for deacons, elders, pastors, caregivers and pastoral care workers and volunteers
- a presentation on "Eight characteristics of healthy churches"
- Colleen and Grace to lead the singing in the opening program

Cost $40 (special group rate $35!)

Celebrating 40 years of Diaconal Ministry

Join us for a special anniversary celebration dinner at Redeemer College. Starts at 5:00 pm. (additional cost $15)

For registration information contact your deacons, or Diaconal Ministries at (905) 646-4511

MODELS FOR FAMILIES or: If it ain't broke, should we fix it?

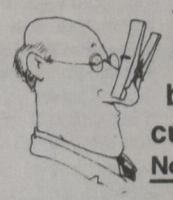
October 4, 1999

What happened to the families we used to know? Are we going to be OK? Are our kids?
Submissions requested:
New family values: What are they? From DINKs (Double Income, No Kids) to SITCOMs (Single Income, Three Children, One Mortgage).
Insight: What are the Bible's "family values"? An analysis of traditional and contemporary family models.
Personal: "I was an only child (or, one of _____ children), and look at me now!"
Photography contest: "The Family Portrait" – a non-professional picture of your family, with 100 words for the caption. Each of 3 winners gets a C.C. personalized family photo mug.
Deadlines: Proposal to us by Sept. 4, and material by Sept. 13.

A WELL-PRESERVED REFORMED WITNESS: but is it still warm?

October 18, 1999

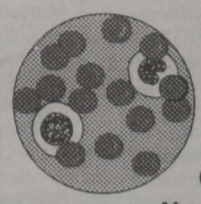
What shape could our "reforming" take in the next millennium?
Help us write our special Reformation Day issue! Provide us with:
A feature article: This is what John Calvin wondered when he came back for a 2-week tour of the 1990s CRC: "Reformed ... Evangelical ... Mainline ...: where is the CRC, where is it on the spectrum, and where is it going?"
A Love Song: "Reformed evangelism – a heartfelt proposal for the next millennium." Your passionate prose could win you $100; or the C.C. Love Song T-shirt; or a free one-year subscription.Wow!
Deadlines:
Proposal to us: September 17, 1999
Manuscript: October 1, 1999



TO SMELL OR NOT TO SMELL: blessings and curses of the nose

November 15, 1999

What role does the sense of smell play in memory, in health, in enjoyment of life, as an aid in worship?
Can you help us with any of these things:
Personal memory: "The smell of _____reminds me of _____." The best 3 will be published, and the writers awarded the C.C. "A rose by any other name..." T-shirt.
Insight: Are consumers being manipulated in the marketplace through subliminal smell? Any other abuses you know of?
Smell & worship: a biblical "picture book" of spiritual smelling
News: "Perfumes and after shaves: the new health threat?"
Deadlines:
Proposal to us: October 15, 1999
Manuscript: October 29, 1999



O BRAVE NEW WORLD – stay tuned for "the New Creation"?

November 29, 1999

What will it cost us to usher in the "brave new world" of biotechnological wonders?

Can you help us prepare this issue:
Meditation: "...For I am fearfully and wonderfully made."
Personal Reflection (any format): "A Grandparent (Parent) Fears for the Future."
Scientific overview: "What to expect in the next century"
A Psalm for a new millennium: your song/poem of praise for the beauty of human creation as it faces biotechnological threats. Writer of the winning piece gets to wear our 100% cotton "New Song" T-shirt.
Deadlines:
Proposal to us: October 29, 1999
Material here: November 5, 1999

Advertising

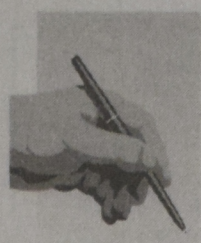
invites you to participate in its

Yes, sign me up!

program of cost-effective promotion for stewardly advertisers

If you are on our business mailing list, you'll be getting a "Yes, sign me up!" package in the mail. Otherwise give us a call at 1-800-969-4838.

Four ways for you to expand awareness of your Christian business or organization in partnership with *Christian Courier:*



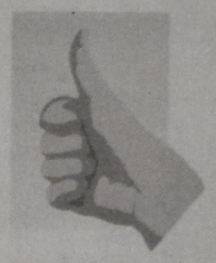
REPRINT RATES

REPRINT RATES*. We save money when we can run the same ad repeatedly. So we're prepared to pass the savings on to you, if you want to take advantage of our re-run rates. Standard cost for 1 column-inch of length (column is 2 inches wide) is $14 per column inch. But with ...

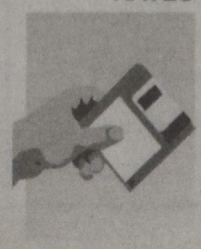
THREE IN A ROW: same ad, 3 consecutive issues, you save 15%

SIX OF ONE: same ad, each of 6 consecutive months, you save 20%

BAKERS DOZEN: same ad, one year, every other issue, you save 25%. **doesn't apply to existing plans.*



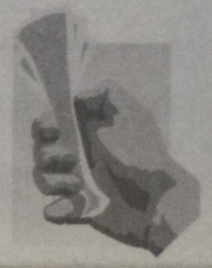
BUSINESS DIRECTORY



½ PRICE CLUB

BUSINESS DIRECTORY. It's a small space ad (2.5" x 1.5"), but our readers know where to find products and services from Christian businesses and organizations quickly. Your ad should be in there – for only $25 per month.

½ PRICE CLUB. Help! We're going to press, and there's a blank space in the paper. Luckily, your ad on file fits that space – and we run it at a 50% savings for you.



KEEP THE CASH

KEEP THE CASH. You have a product or service for sale, and so do we. If we can give a sample of your product to each new subscriber in a certain month, we'll give YOU the equivalent value in *Christian Courier* advertising space. No money exchanges hands. Great idea.

THE KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Christian University Education

Faculty Position Openings

Biology

Introductory Biology, Genetics, Molecular Cell Biology, or Vertebrate Physiology and one or more of the following: Microbiology, Vertebrate Zoology, Human Anatomy and Physiology (non-majors), and Ethology.

Application Deadline: **October 22, 1999, or when filled**.

Mathematics

Introductory and intermediate Calculus and Differential Equations. Other areas of teaching responsibility include one or more of the following: Introductory Statistics, Computing Science, Linear Algebra, and foundations of mathematics. Expertise in areas of Applied Mathematics.

Application Deadline: **November 5, 1999, or when filled**.

Psychology

Personality, Abnormal, and Clinical Psychology. Additional course assignments could include one or more of Psychometrics, Cognition, Counselling, Community Psychology and History of Psychology. Clinical experience is an asset in both teaching and research.

Application Deadline: **December 10, 1999, or when filled**.

To be considered for appointment, any candidate must indicate a commitment to the Mission Statement and the Statement of Faith of the College. **Starting Date: July 1, 2000.** Starting Salary: $37,000 and up with a generous benefit package. Qualified candidates may inquire to:

Dr. S. Keith Ward, Vice President (Academic)
The King's University College
9125 - 50 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2H3
Tel: 780-465-8304; Fax: 780-465-3534
e-mail: skward@kingsu.ab.ca web: www.kingsu.ab.ca

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Classifieds

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

ICS is seeking to fill the full-time position of **Director of Student Services** (effective immediately).

Tasks:
- plan and implement the Institute's student recruitment program
- provide admissions counseling
- assist in providing on-site student services that contribute to a high quality learning experience
- coordinate alumni relations

Qualifications:
- enthusiastic commitment to the mission of ICS in Christian graduate education
- ability to interact with students from a wide variety of Christian traditions on key issues in Christian learning
- strong interpersonal and organizational skills
- experience as a graduate student (completed master's program preferred)

(Depending on the qualifications and availability of applicants, ICS may consider creating two part-time positions in recruitment/admissions, and student services/alumni relations.)

Send resume, including names, addresses and phone numbers of three references, by September 15, to Dr. Harry Fernhout, President (*hfernhout@icscanada.edu*).

229 College Street
Suite 200,
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 1R4

Phone: 416-979-2331
Toll free: 888-326-5347
Fax: 416-979-2332

www.icscanada.edu

The Niagara Christian Education Foundation

The Niagara Christian Education Foundation, *a new foundation for the purpose of financially assisting member Christian schools in the Niagara Peninsula, is searching for a full time* ***Development Director.***

The person we are seeking will be responsible for **executing the vision** of the Foundation. This will include establishing an **administrative structure** and support for the purpose of explaining and promoting the **goals, aims and challenges of Christian Education** and seeking **financial support** through long-term giving programs and estate gifts.

The preferred candidate will have ***experience and knowledge*** *in the area of planned giving and will be able to successfully achieve these goals on their own initiative and with a minimum of supervision. In addition, they will have a* ***strong commitment to Christian education.***

Please forward resumes or additional inquiries to
Niagara Christian Education Foundation
c/o Theo Meester, Box 299, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
e-mail: theo@meesterinsurance.com

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Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
Phone: (519) 539-2117

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We are
".....**Overflowing With Thankfulness**" (Col.2:7)
and invite all former parents, students,
staff and supporters to celebrate the
40th Anniversary of

Willowdale Christian School

60 Hilda Ave.
North York, ON M2M 1V5
Saturday, September 25, 1999
2:00 p.m. Open House
4:00 p.m. Service of Celebration
(Thanksgiving offering)
6:00 p.m. Standing Reception
(photos and memorabilia from 1959-1977 would be appreciated)

---

3 Reasons to Get Your Copy of
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THE LIVING WORD

Synodical Committee for Reading Services
in the Christian Reformed Church

Each year we publish **three** booklets of **nine** sermons each. Annual subscription rate is $90 CDN or $65 US. Back copies of single booklets are available at half price plus postage.

These sermons are also suitable for use in visits to shut-ins or in services in hospitals, seniors residences and nursing homes.

Contact:

The Living Word
c/o Ray Vander Ploeg, Secr./Treas.
37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1 Canada

phone: 519-539-2117

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CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Calvin Seminary Opening

The Calvin Theological Seminary
Board of Trustees
recently declared a vacancy in the field of
DOMESTIC MISSIOLOGY.

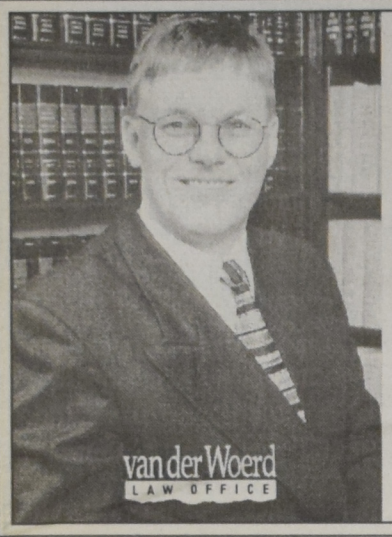
Persons should have advanced training and experience in evangelism, church planting, new church development, or other areas related to spreading the gospel and building the church in North America.

A position description is available from the seminary president, to whom all correspondence should be directed at 3233 Burton Street, S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49546 USA, fax 616-957-8621. Inquiries will be received until September 30, 1999.

Events/Classifieds

Calendar of Events

Sept. 12	Dutch Service, Rev. Henry DeBolster, Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster**, Ont., 3 p.m. (#)
Sept. 25	40th Anniversary of John Knox Christian School, Woodstock, Ont. Service of Thanksgiving at 2 p.m. in the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, Hwy. 59 & 401, **Woodstock**, Ont. Open house at the school after the service. (#)
Oct. 16	Netherlands Bazaar, Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave., **Thornhill**, Ont., Free admission. 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. (#)
Oct. 16	A day of encouragement and training for deacons, elders and other caregivers at Hamilton District Christian High School in **Ancaster**, Ont. Theme: "Refreshing our hope!" Featuring 54 workshops including special sessions for elders and caregivers. Cost: $40. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or call Diaconal Ministries at 905-646-4511. (#)



Merger Announcement

The partners of Ross & McBride are pleased to announce the merger of the David A. van der Woerd practice with Ross & McBride, under the continuing name of Ross & McBride. Building on a tradition that spans more than a century, Ross & McBride provides personal yet professional service in a wide variety of contemporary legal disciplines.

The merger will enhance the personal attention David provides to his clients and will broaden the scope of the services available to them.

Now in his tenth year in the practice of law, David will continue to focus on corporate and commercial law, real estate, wills and estate planning, and charitable law.

ROSS & McBRIDE LAW FIRM

Commerce Place, 1 King Street West
Mail: P.O. Box 907, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3P6
Phone: 905-526-9800 Fax: 905-526-0732
Email: dvanderwoerd@rossmcbride.com
Direct Dial: **905-572-5803**

John Knox Christian School
800 Juliana Drive,
Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8
will be
"Celebrating God's Faithfulness"
to us in the past 40 years – 1959 - 1999,
on September 25, 1999 D.V.
with a Service of Thanksgiving
at 2 p.m. in the
Maranatha Christian Reformed Church,
Hwy. 59 & 401, Woodstock.
Our guest speaker will be
Dan VanderArk,
Executive Director of
Christian Schools International.
The service will be followed by an
Open House
at John Knox Christian School.
All former students, teachers, board members, parents and friends of John Knox Christian School are invited to join us in this celebration.

519-539-1492
johnknox@execulink.com

The Church in the Woods
Waterloo Christian Reformed Church is pleased to invite all Waterloo area university and college students, their parents and friends, to a
Student Welcome Service
on Sunday, September 12, 1999
10:30 am
After the service, information about Huron Campus Ministry – Grace Christian Fellowship – at the University of Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier University will be presented and an excellent luncheon provided.
Please contact Chaplain Graham E. Morbey at 519-886-1474 or 519-884-1970 ext.2739 for further information and assistance. The Waterloo CRC is located at 209 Bearinger Road, Waterloo.

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Going to Brock University?
Stop by and say hello to the CRC chaplain, Peter Schuurman. If you need help getting settled or are interested in getting involved in campus ministries, give him a call.

All are welcome to the **Brock Campus Ministries Open House**: Thurs., Sept. 16, 11:30 - 2:30. Refreshments will be served.

Brock University Campus Ministries
Peter Schuurman, CRC Chaplain
Decew Residence 202
905-688-5550 x 3134
pschuurm@spartan.ac.brocku.ca
Check out the Bible studies, book studies, prayer groups and cost suppers!

To Students coming to McMaster University, Hamilton

You are warmly invited to come out and meet other students and participate in Chaplaincy Centre activities.

- ✓ **Welcome BBQ**: September 16, 5:30 p.m.
- ✓ **Inaugural Chapel**: September 14, 12:30 p.m. at the Chaplaincy Centre
- ✓ **Monthly Film/Dinner Discussions**: Beginning Sept. 28.
- ✓ **Christian Fellowship Dinner**: Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. beginning Sept. 23.
- ✓ **Monthly Brown-Bag Lunch Discussions**
- ✓ **Spirituality "101" Retreat** at St. Paul's Anglican Church: Saturday, September 25, 9:30 a.m. - 7 p.m. *Pre-registration Essential!*
- ✓ **Wilderness Retreat**: Oct 1-3.

For more information please contact Michael Fallon at (905) 525-9140, ext. 24123 or e-mail fallonm@mcmaster.ca

Christian Festival Concert

Roy Thomson Hall
*** Friday, November 5 ***
by the
Ontario Christian Music Assembly
and guests Maya Roodveldt, soprano
Dirk Out & Andre Knevel, organ & piano
under the direction of
LEENDERT KOOIJ
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Call (416)636-9779 for tickets or info.

News

CRWRC staff from five continents share common faith, evaluate effectiveness

Alan Doerksen (with files from Keith Knight)

RIDGETOWN, Ont. – Fellowship, structure, community-building and storytelling bound together the Assembly of Worldwide Partners, a triennial gathering of Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) staff and partners, held Aug. 11 to 15 in Ridgetown, Ont.

The 260 people who attended included CRWRC staff from Canada and the U.S., and partners from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. The cultural contrasts were reflected in a "celebration of diversity" one evening, at which participants from the represented countries performed native dances and songs. And a closing two-hour worship service pointedly demonstrated that the culturally diverse participants are tied to each other and the church by a common faith.

Of all Christian Reformed Church agencies, CRWRC and its relief and development work worldwide seems to be the mission work that is dearest to the hearts of Canadian CRC members, perhaps because of the high value those members place on diaconal "word and deed" ministry.

Three years later

On the "work" side, the structure of CRWRC was the key discussion point of the gathering. With the synodical approval of a restructuring plan for Canadian CRC ministries three years ago, the agency has enacted sweeping changes, and is now team-based rather than hierarchical. The agency is now evaluating the changes, and this conference was a way to get worldwide staff involved in the evaluation.

If much of the August 13 meetings were focused on structure, the next day focused on storytelling. Members of partner agencies "all told glowingly how CRWRC helped their organization develop a ministry focus," says Keith Knight, who reported on the conference for the Presbyterian Church in Canada. "They also related stories about their cultural peculiarities, from civil war in Sierra Leone to a quiet revival in Romania."

Holistic, if not quite perfect, approach

Peter Bulthuis of CRWRC Canada made this observation: "It is so good to sit at the feet of our staff and partners and learn from them.... We have not lost sight of our mission and vision statements.... Three years ago, we began the transition process. We expected it to be perfect by now. This kind of process takes six [to] nine years. There is ambiguity and lack of clarity. These are the growing pains of an organization that is changing."

Jan Disselkoen, a literacy worker with CRWRC in Niger, said the conference was "like being at a family reunion. It's a community builder. We can hang out our dirty laundry because we're family.... We spent too much time getting all this information but not enough time listening to our partners.... On evaluation, I hope we don't spend too much time getting perfect. Our focus should be on working with the poor."

Caleb Dembele, who works with a partner agency in Mali, said her agency's "relationship with CRWRC is a good one. Although there are other partner organizations in the area, it is the way CRWRC uses a holistic approach that attracts us, bringing the Word of God along with healthcare. Since working with CRWRC, five churches have been developed in those villages. Yes, we are doing literacy and health [work], but we also bring the Gospel. It is true that our relationship with a funding organization will have to come to an end at some point, but right now we work well together."

A "Celebration of Diversity" highlighted the multicultural nature of CRWRC's workers and partners.

News Digest

Man and Superman

TORONTO – A battle is beginning in a Toronto courtroom between the Man of Steel and the Man of Cash. DC Comics, copyright owners of the Superman comic book and movie character, are suing "Cashman," also known as Russell Oliver. He is a middle-aged, paunchy businessman who dresses in a suit much like that of Superman in order to sell jewellery, reports the *Globe and Mail*. He even wears a gold logo with a stylized S, but the S is a dollar sign.

DC Comics claims the Cashman character infringes its copyright and creates confusion in the public mind about Superman's identity. It wants $200,000 in damages.

The company argues that since Cashman spins around in a phone booth, then jumps out in a red and blue suit, he implies he has the endorsement of the company.

But Oliver argues, "The whole purpose of Cashman is to sell jewellery, while Superman does good throughout the universe but doesn't do it for profit."

Many happy returns

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil – In August, fugitive criminal Ronnie Biggs, famous for "The Great Train Robbery," celebrated his birthday in Rio de Janeiro with a barbecue for 140 people, reports the *Sunday Telegraph*.

Retired Scotland Yard detective Jack Slipper, 75, sent these birthday greetings from Britain: "Give yourself up. You'll not have to serve all the remaining 28 years of your sentence. Because you've had a stroke, you'll only have to serve a couple of years."

The roofman robber

TORONTO – Police in the western U.S. are pursuing the "roofman robber," a polite burglar whose *modus operandi* is to cut a hole in the roof of a fast-food restaurant, spend the night hiding in its false ceiling, drop to the floor when staff arrive in the morning, and then demand they open the safe.

His unorthodox entry circumvents the alarm, states the *Globe and Mail*. The roofman robber is blamed for 27 break-ins in three states but has not been caught.

Classis Niagara Church Directory

Directory 2000 ad deadline: Nov.1/99

Each year *Christian Courier* produces a church directory for the 13 Christian Reformed Churches in Classis Niagara. This project is financially feasible thanks to the many Christian organizations and businesses which buy advertising space in the directory.

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If you think your ad should be in there, too, don't miss this opportunity to get your message to 2200 CRC families – and to help support good communication within the church family.

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